DWB

The British Journal of Telefantasy No. 74 FEBRUARY 1990 U.K. £1.80 rec. U.S. $4.95

SOPHIE'S UNCERTAIN FUTURE...

DOCTOR WHO...STAR TREK...THE BATMAN...
STAR TREK: NEXT GENERATION...GERRY ANDERSON...

DWB

P.O.Box 1015, BRIGHTON BN2 2YU

If you bought last month's DWB special in a specialist bookshop you can't fail to have noticed the cover price went over the £3 mark. Try as we might we could not keep it below the psychological £3 (the specials have actually held at £2.95 since December 1987!) as production costs - including the extra colour - and postal increases have forced us upwards. Postal costs are also primarily to blame for the rise in price of the standard issues to £1.80. On the new, glossier paper (which results in better reproduction of photographic material), the cost to post your standard issues has risen from 14p last September to 24p today, together with an extra 5p to post them in the more appropriate A4 envelopes, hence the 15p rise.

The reason DWB appears expensive in comparison to a magazine purchased from, say, W.H.Smith, is because we are a specialist magazine with limited appeal. Most of the cost of a magazine goes into the colour separations, the making of plates, design work etc., and once a magazine is up and printing the cost per thousand copies is nominal. Because our print run, obviously, is low, most of the cost therefore goes into production rather than printing. If DWB were to be sold in Smith's our cover price would half, but we would be forced to make changes to our format to give us more commercial appeal, thus lessening our specialised approach and subsequently the quality and depth of the magazine. I'm sure you will agree that the extra cost is well worth the informed and specialised telefantasy coverage you cannot expect from W.H.Smith's magazine rack! GARY

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS: BBC Picture Publicity, Jeremy Bentham, Tim Birchall, Channel 4 Picture Publicity, Anthony Clark, Robert Cope, Peter Darvill-Evans and W.H.Allen, John H.Elsen, Richard Fitzgerald, Liz Gay & Titan Books, James Howarth, Mark James, Julian Knott, Tim Munro, Alister Pearson, Andrew Pixley, Brian Robb, Mike Smith, Andrew Thomas, Kathleen Toth.

TO ORDER NEXT ISSUE (DWB#75, March 1990): Send a crossed cheque/PO payable to DWB for £1.80 (£2.20 in card envelope) or US$3.95 to DWB#75, PO Box 1015, BRIGHTON BN2 2YU.
A SUBSCRIPTION from next issue up to January 1990 is £25.20 (£30.80 for card envelopes) or US$53 (Please enclose an SAE.

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VOLUME TWO, NUMBER ONE: PUBLISHED THURSDAY, JANUARY 18th 1990.
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EXIT SYLVESTER AND SOPHIE?

DOUBTS are mounting concerning Sylvester McCoy and Sophie Aldred's future in 'Doctor Who'.

In the December issue of the American St.Louis fan club newspaper 'Timelord Times', Sophie revealed that her and Sylvester's contracts for Season 27 had been cancelled and as far as they are concerned they will not be doing anymore **Doctor Who.**

While this news is not official, it would indicate that the BBC are bowing to pressures from independent companies bidding to take on the series who would want to start afresh with a new line-up, despite the fact that McCoy and Aldred clearly work well together. Indeed Sophie went on to state that even if one of the characters was to continue, both would refuse to return unless they were back in the series together, such is their allegiance to one another.

BBC GETTING COLD FEET?

It has been suggested that the BBC may decide against independent production after all. The influx of outside bids appears to have opened their eyes to the interest shown in the series and the fact that, if produced to a high standard, could become a high-rated and popular series again. The delay for an announcement of the series' future could well be because the BBC are reconsidering their options...

CREGEEN COMMITS HIMSELF TO A WINNING FORMAT

THE BBC's Head of Series and Serials, Peter Cregeen, has committed himself in no uncertain terms to a future for 'Doctor Who'.

In a recent conversation with a freelance media journalist, he stated that although the show has been earmarked for farming out, "it is still possible that we will keep it in-house."

He revealed it was important to find "a format that will take **Doctor Who** into the 90's (and) keep it on our screens for the next ten years.

"This could mean using an independent company but as yet no tendering process has been instigated, although several interested parties have come forward with their own proposals."

MAJOR CONCERN

Any final decision will be "ideas lead" on the basis that the product that ends up on our screens is his major concern rather than the financial package that funds it.

He also made it quite clear that no decision would be made until April or May.

However, as a man firmly committed to the BBC's independent productions quota (which is at present running in advance of its target), there must be a better than evens chance that the Doctor will go private if the right bid is made.

DWB Reporter

JNT STILL HANGING ON!

FOLLOWING last month's optimistic story headed 'Farewell Nathan-Turner', it transpires that JN-T is still guardian over **Doctor Who** for the time being and still has the final say over matters concerning the show which now amounts to just publicity and merchandising. The BBC press office told us he had finished with the series when really they meant he had completed post-production work on **Survival** and so had completed his creative input!

Apparently JNT has not been offered another series to work on so his producership on **Who** continues into its 11th year...

BRIEFLY...

BSB have elected to screen every **Doctor Who** story that exists in complete form when it starts transmitting its satellite service. Though a starting date has yet to be finalised, it is likely an episode each weekday evening will be shown on its Galaxy channel. If so it would take almost two years to complete!

RATINGS for **Survival** have continued the upward trend of Season 26, indicating perhaps that more people started tuning in as they became aware that **Doctor Who** was actually back on screen. **Survival** ended the season well up on the four million average up to then, possibly as a result of the impact made by its predecessor:

Survival(1)	5.0m (89th)
Survival(2)	4.8m (96th)
Survival(3)	5.0m (?)

With a season average of just 4.16m, this is by far the lowest-rated season in **Doctor Who**'s 26-year history.

BBC VIDEO have set February 5th as the release date for the first of this year's bumper batch of **Doctor Who** videos - **An Unearthly Child** and **The War Games**, retailing at £9.99 and £19.99 respectively.

THE BBC has given permission for W.H.Allen to publish **Doctor Who** fiction. Editor Peter Darvill-Evans told DWB he will be looking for a combination of old, recent and new talent, and particularly literate fans will also be considered. The series will be presented in a different format to the TV novels to avoid the two being confused, and Peter is hoping that the new range of fiction will coincide with the transmission of the new-look Season 27.

The Official **Doctor Who** and the Daleks Book published in the States last year will not be materialising in Britain after all. W.H.Allen were to have reprinted the book from the original plates and with a redesigned cover, but quickly changed their minds on sight of the ghastly reproduction of the photographic content.

LAST NOVEMBER Coast To Coast went to the States in an attempt to raise the £15 million budget their proposed **Who** movie requires. They returned without any firm offer so it seems the movie is no closer to being made than it was three years ago. But when you consider that all Coast To Coast allegedly have to show for their efforts is a script and a few rushed -together colour designs, one wonders if they can even be taken seriously!

TOM BAKER is back at the BBC where he is involved in a project titled 'Hyperland'.

Meanwhile Jon Pertwee is devoting most of his energies in 1990 to getting Worzel Gummidge back into production by the end of the year.

THE FRAME have moved. Their new address is: David Howe, 61 Elgar Ave., Tolworth, Surbiton, Surrey KT5 9JP.

FOLLOWING our report of the controversial American convention Timelord '89 last September (DWB#72), we have since heard that the organiser, Pat Baumgardner, has been indicted on two counts for writing bad cheques for convention expenses.

THE CHASE, which sold out quickly last summer, has been reprinted by W.H.Allen.

COMMENT

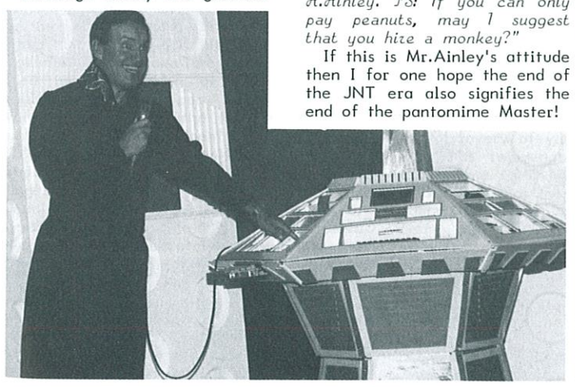
ANYONE contemplating staging a convention should not consider inviting Anthony Ainley - unless they have substantial resources!

It appears Mr.Ainley has been to too many US conventions in his time to the point where he contemptuously dismisses the far lower-key and non-profit making - though invariably enjoyable - British counterparts. The fact that he lowers himself to writing such nasty and curt replies to invitations from British fans is a reflection of the character he plays on **Doctor Who.**

Although hardly the greatest actor ever to have appeared in the series, the following example of a reply he sent to the South Wales Local Group last year is so self-righteous it could have been written by the Master himself:

"You have to be joking - I haven't worked for such a minuscule fee since I was a naive novice. Not do I intend to. (With respect). And the thought of leaving my armchair and cosy fireplace in London, to entertain 30 people in Swansea, on a cold night, leaves me somewhat crestfallen just contemplating it. But well tried old chap, and better luck next time. Yours chuckling, A.Ainley. PS: If you can only pay peanuts, may I suggest that you hire a monkey?"

If this is Mr.Ainley's attitude then I for one hope the end of the JNT era also signifies the end of the pantomime Master!



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SYLVO?

"...a super idea from a super fan!" - P.K.Smith

Is Sylvester the Real McCoy?

James Griffiths, Clwyd (27-12-89)
What is happening to **Doctor Who** fans ? In every issue of **DWB** they write in praising Season 26 to the skies, hailing each new atrocity of a story as a "classic". Can't they see what a sheer **mess** the series has become ?

First of all, the fundamental premise of **Doctor Who** has been perverted completely. No longer do we have the travelling eccentric who does not know how to control his time machine. The vulnerable pacifist has gone, replaced by a calculating, destructive know-all who can steer the TARDIS anywhere he wishes and whose number one aim is not to travel and explore the unknown but to polish off old (and future) enemies which we know nothing about. Andrew Cartmel has shown a blatant disregard for the show's history, constructing a mythology around the Doctor which has nothing to do with what's gone before.

The Seventh Doctor is quite simply not the same character as the one portrayed by Messrs. Hartnell, Troughton, Pertwee, Bakers and Davison. His motivation is different, his powers are more extensive (invisible bolts of energy fired from his fingertips?!), his knowledge more extensive also. He even has a different past with a different set of old adversaries.

Even if fans actually like this utterly changed version of the programme, surely they can see how utterly incoherent the individual stories have become ? Each tale is a confusion unto itself! For example, take **Ghost Light:** Why are Light's specimens working night-shifts in a Victorian mansion ? Why haven't the police been called in to investigate in force ? Which members of the household are specimens of the original experiment and which members have merely stumbled into the house and fallen under the control of Josiah ? Who is Josiah ? Why does he keep changing ? Who is Control ? What is their relationship with Light (Josiah is terrified of him, then expects him to dinner) ? The list of questions is endless and the same applies to **The Curse of Fenric**, a story which also makes no sense whatsoever. What **did** it all mean ? How did the Doctor put Fenric into a bottle ? How did Fenric mastermind Ace's journey to Iceworld if he was trapped in that bottle ? What's all this about chess and "shadow dimensions"? And why the hell does Dinsdale Lansden simply **vanish** with no explanation just before the climax ? Why, if Fenric can transport himself from place to place in a beam of light, does he not use this talent to escape the cabbage-head at the end of part four ? Presumably for the same reason that Morgaine did not use her incredible powers to prevent her being hauled off to prison by a couple of soldiers at the end of **Battlefield.**

There isn't a scrap of logic anywhere! And before anyone tells me that I'm showing a lack of imagination, let me just say this: Was **The Talons of Weng-Chiang** boring and uninspired because it had a coherent plot that needed no English degree-level interpretation ? Was **The Caves of Androzani** unimaginative because you could understand it ? Perhaps **City of Death,** initially confusing and baffling, would have been rendered even more effective if the ingenious plot revelations in the second half of the story had been omitted, leaving us to flounder in the dark and arrive (after three-dozen video watchings) at our own differing interpretations ?

How can the public be expected to watch a **plot-based** family drama series, where the plot is never explained and where the dénouement always revolves around some ambiguous and confusing reference to the Doctor's dark past (which he has only recently acquired) ? I'm not denying that the series now is very well directed, designed and acted, but I belong to an almost extinct section of fandom which believes that a strong central **storyline** is the most essential aspect of each adventure.

I remember a time when stories with weak or confused plots were slammed as "turkeys", or at the very least "unsatisfactory" (**The Time Monster, Warriors' Gate**, etc.). The current mentality of fandom seems to be "if you slap a good monster in and bung in a few interesting camera angles, who gives a damn about the plot ?" I don't know about anyone else, but I find this rather sad. And quite a few people agree with me, including Sydney Newman ("Who's he ?", I hear the DWM readers ask), Terry Nation, Victor Pemberton, Peter Bryant and a host of others; all people who were instrumental in the making of **Doctor Who** when it really was a classic and **popular** television series.

Paul Clifton, London SW1 (1-1-90)
It was interesting to note that all three of your **Doctor Who**-related interviews that appeared in DWB#73 (Mervyn Haisman, Peter Bryant and Marek Anton) made reference to today's incomprehensible plotlines and confused storytelling style. Being professionals in their own right, what does this tell us about the competency of Andrew Cartmel and JNT ?

My main reason for writing, however, is to urge you to stop giving free publicity to Coast To Coast's 'alleged' **Doctor Who** movie, at least until it enters production, if it ever does. The whole charade has been a continuous sham of false starts, pathetic publicity stunts and hype, and I'm sure most fans are by now sick to the back teeth of the whole project. Stop wasting space on Coast To Coast until there is actually something concrete to report!

Bryan Jenner, Alberta, Canada (15-12-89)
With the apparent temporary shelving of **Doctor Who** in 1990, the prime focus will be on the movie, if it does come about. However, because it has been delayed for so long, the damage to its cinematic chances are immense.

I can not see a **Batman**-like phenomenon occurring with the **Who** film, and for one simple reason: the time-travel format is virtually exhausted. **Doctor Who** will, in the public's eye, be the imitator!

In recent years, and in the not-too-distant future, audiences will have or will soon be treated to, for example, Back To The Future I, II and III, Millennium, Bill & Ted's Excellent Adventure I and II and others. **Doctor Who** - The Time Lord will be only the latest in an avalanche of time travel films, and the public will understandably feel blasé about it.

Batman was relatively novel. **Doctor Who** will not be. Sad as it may seem, the box office for the movie will be dismal, and will signify the death of the universe's greatest hero.

On an unrelated note, as British fans again wonder whether they will be treated to repeats of **Doctor Who,** I would like to unintentionally rub salt into their wounds. In the snowy confines of Calgary, we are currently treated to **three** different Doctors, seven nights per week. For instance, a fan watching during the first week of January can view **Revelation of the Daleks** on PBS on Saturday, and on the nationwide channel YTV, he can sit back to **The Seeds of Death** on weekdays and **Battlefield** on Sundays.

This should come as proof positive that to fully enjoy the series they help make, British fans need to emigrate elsewhere!!

David Weides, Minnesota, USA (13-12-89)
Doctor Who as a PBS phenomenon has ridden the entire length of its wave of popularity in this country. The saturation level of interest has been reached, even for the most recent seasons in many parts of the country, simply because the series has been shown, and repeated, for nearly seven years now, and there is very little left to discover for the casual fan of the show.

PBS stations are bored with the programme, its rather narrow and vocal constituency, and don't want to put up with Lionheart's extortionate tactics. Twenty-episode seasons in the future, should they happen, won't change this attitude because the preferred method of airing remains the omnibus 'movie' format, this meaning a new season is shown in just a month. More interest could be sustained, I suspect, if the new season were screened episodically at first with a repeat showing in 'movie' format later (six to twelve months usually) to extend the novelty of new stories as long as possible. But this is unlikely. And this is unfortunate because, bringing me back to my original point, if the series is now being made primarily for the foreign revenue it produces with consumption in the 'home market' a necessary after-thought, then the future looks somewhat bleak and externalization could take some time while the drama department and BBC Enterprises study what their realistic rate of return (from foreign sales) will be.

MISGIVINGS ON FILM

Korvin Mobberley, West Midlands (27-12-89)
I'm afraid I can't agree with Tim Munro's comments on **Ghost Light** (DWB#73); my sentiments are similar to David Miller's - **Light** is poor storytelling. As Alan Wareing admitted, he didn't understand the script, so regardless of whether the audience can (and I suspect most didn't), if the director doesn't he can hardly turn out a coherent interpretation of it and no amount of 'traditional' 70's style fluid camera work and beautifully-controlled lighting can disguise this. JNT can take some blame: an efficient and interested producer might have moved the story to third in transmission order. Production would then have been less rushed and Wareing would have the time to interpret such a difficult, intelligent script properly.

I'm not sure the story is the return to traditional **Doctor Who** values that Tim suggests. The Doctor, while not quite the meddler of **Remembrance of the Daleks** or indeed **Survival** (didn't the Doctor kill Midge by deliberately crashing the motorbikes ?), isn't quite the traditional Sherlock Holmes - like the Doctor I know. I find it difficult to believe that Cartmel had a sudden change of heart for this story regarding the Doctor, but if Tim can convince me that the Doctor **does** work to prove his genius with brilliant deductive powers and knowledge, then I will be quite happy to withdraw this. I agree in part that a proper mysterious past is returning to the character - the listing of 'unrequited love' as one of the Doctor's biggest fears was great, as were the family references in the excellent **Fenric.** At the end of the day, though, I can't agree that **Ghost Light** is traditional **Who** reassessed for the 90's - I see it as the usual Cartmellian rubbish dressed up to look traditional.

The future of **Doctor Who** certainly looks interesting; independent production looks to be a certainty, but I'm suspicious of the BBC's motives in achieving it. Their attitude to **Doctor Who** for some time has been to make as much money as possible with as little effort or funding as possible; now, any effort on their part can be totally removed as they won't even have to make it themselves. Whatever their motives, independent production can be good for the series artistically but I stress the 'can' as there are possible downfalls too. An obvious problem of JNT's extended tenure was a lack of fresh ideas at the top. Would a production company pose the same problem ? They are usually responsible for finite serials only, not long-running drama like **Doctor Who.** I can hardly see the series being shunted around different companies every five years. American backing is tricky as it could impose artistic restrictions; there are enough already from overseas sales and the vast merchandising industry built around the series. Both these things are all that has saved the series from cancellation, but they have been an important factor in its artistic downfall. American backing might only make things worse.

A higher episode count is obviously something to look forward to, but I have grave misgivings about going over to film. To make **Doctor Who** entirely on film would be a terribly shortsighted decision, just as it is shortsighted of the BBC to make it entirely on video. While I agree the 'look' of film is superficially 'better' than VT, I believe that there are advantages and disadvantages to both. **Doctor Who**'s oft-quoted appeal is its incredible flexibility and its unique format of several self-contained serials per season. This format could allow some stories entirely on film, some entirely on video, and others on a mix of the two. I detest the way British TV is adopting the American and Australian norm of **either** film or video; in this way, **Doctor Who** could go against the grain. My position on the eternal film vs. VT debate is this: it is **Doctor Who**'s **unique** format that gives it the **unique** ability to have the best of both worlds, to have the advantages of both systems at its disposal. It would be a great shame if the series' new producers did not exploit its potential in this way.

MORE RESURRECTIONS THAN LAZARUS!

John Papadatos, Melbourne, Oz (16-12-89)
While my enthusiasm for **Doctor Who** in the last five years had started to wane, my discovery of your magazine earlier this year has rejuvenated my interest in the programme. I have collected as many back issues as possible (your three free posters offer was a great first step) and it comes as no surprise that the high standard of the articles that you have produced is what your readers have come to expect.

I was, however, mortified to read the cover headline of **DWB**#72 ("...and it's goodbye from him"). After reading similar headlines in back issues I take such "good" news with a touch of salt. Mr.Nathan-Turner has had more resurrections than Lazarus! Please don't print such headlines until it is conclusively known that JNT has left!

The issue also contained nice interviews with Messrs.Pemberton and Byrne, and I'm glad you print photos of your interviewees, and I agreed with David Waddell's letter on the opening graphics - every time I see Sylvester winking at me, I get a sudden urge to kick the telelvision set!

Regarding Paul Lang's view on your spate of Sylvester covers (**DWB**#s 70 and 71), those two issues were in my local SF specialist shop at the same time. One cover of Mr.McCoy was bearable, but **two,** one after the other, was not! I thought I was looking at DWM since they seem to have lost all their photos, except ones featuring Sylvester! Then again, I prefer Sylvester covers to a tomato-like face of the "most popular **Doctor Who** producer of all time" (it's true, he told me himself!).

I was interested to see yet more controversy regarding US conventions and JNT. Why bother reading about Irangate etc. in the mainstream press when **DWB** brings us such gems! I hope you try to find out more about what went on, and by the way, whatever was the outcome of the BBC's investigation concerning the programmes JNT took over to the US for a "fee" ?

Sharon Ann Campbell, Washington (19-12-89)
Greetings to the gentleman unhappy with the publication of press clippings in **DWB**(#72). Being unable to afford by-mail subscriptions to British newspapers, I certainly appreciate seeing them! A most interesting and informative magazine. Thanks.

Darren Short, Berkshire (29-11-89)
Thanks for **DWB**#72, except for one or two articles. Tim Munro's piece on **Star Trek:** The Present Degeneration was a terrible article. I've never read such trivial whinging. Hasn't he got anything better to write about than videos not coming out ? His extremely dull whine-session is a waste of **DWB**'s time and ours - I think he ought to try writing in an intelligent way about why this soporific series is so good for us, instead of sneering at children and shop assistants. Please cut the long-winded stuff in future.

My second quibble lies in why you seem to pander to such a hypocrite as Victor Pemberton. I was astonished to read he hadn't even **seen** any McCoy stories. Then how on earth can he justify **any** of his comments on the series over the last two or three years ? He can't be bothered to even watch the current stories, yet lambastes the whole production style, based on what ? The cast list in the Radio Times, perhaps, or even photos he's just glimpsed at in the papers ? Let's hope he adopts a little humility in future instead of going round the country arrogantly discussing JNT when he doesn't pay the due critical respect and **watch** the programmes!

BSB AT JUST THE RIGHT TIME

Simon O'Connor, Channel Islands (19-11-89)
The news that British Satellite Broadcasting will be showing vintage episodes has come at just the right time. With no new season next year, and the possibility of any repeats on BBC1 almost non-existent, it looks at though the only **Doctor Who** on British screens in 1990 will be on BSB. At last the early Doctors will be given the recognition they deserve from the generations that have known only JNT-produced **Who.**

S U R V I V A L

B B C(c)

RONA MUNRO's 'Survival' concluded an (as ever) variable season of 'Doctor Who'.

The opening tale of the season, **Battlefield**, is best forgotten. It failed to work on any level, an unfortunate waste of talent and time, with very, very few redeeming features. **Ghost Light** was a different matter altogether - one of the best and most fascinating **Doctor Who** tales ever produced. It was difficult to believe both stories came from the same production team. Ian Briggs' **The Curse of Fenric** consisted of three very good episodes which rather lost its way (and most of the audience, probably) in the last half of the final episode.

Survival had a lot to do. It is likely to be the last **Doctor Who** story we'll see on our screens for perhaps a couple of years. It is also the final John Nathan-Turner production to be broadcast. It has to stand as his final statement on the programme. It also had to perform successfully as an episodic drama. That may seem an odd thing to say, but much of **Doctor Who** in the eighties has not worked as episodic serials. **Survival** works much better as a 'film'. Rona Munro writes better in the longform, as her Play On One showed, and the two cliffhangers featured in **Survival** were clearly slotted in to break the drama into three parts. **Survival** doesn't play as three acts, unlike **Ghost Light**. It develops, yes, but it is easier to follow as one segment, not spread across three weeks. Hence, the story improves on subsequent viewings.

It was nice to see an overtly contemporary **Doctor Who** tale again - the first since **Silver Nemesis** and **Attack of the Cybermen** before that. The opening episode made good use of Perivale, the place where nothing ever happens, and took its time in setting up the missing teenagers plot for the Doctor to investigate. It was a very traditional, though a tad dull episode, only enlivened by the appearance of Hale and Pace in their shopkeepers cameo. The slow pace of the episode allowed for a certain amount of comedy and humour (the Cats poster, "I thought you were dead...either that or gone to Birmingham", and Hale and Pace) which was not out of place, for a change.

It was good to see the pace build up towards the end of the opening segment, as Ace is at first fascinated by the appearance of the Cheetah person in the swing park and is then fighting for her life as the prey in the hunt. Her amazed look and mouthing of the word "Wow" spoke volumes about her character. Even when running away from "the monster", Ace makes good use of the swing park obstacles to keep her hunter at bay. The Doctor arrives and Ace has gone, obviously, he surmises, to "an alien planet".

Rona Munro has created, in **Survival**, a unique alien landscape, a planet which has spawned the Cheetah people and the Kittlings. The ideas in **Survival** hark back to some of the classic alien **Doctor Who** planets of the past - the link between the creatures and the doomed planet, and the "contamination" of the new arrivals on the planet are both cleverly used science fiction ideas. The planet is as much a character in the drama as the leads.

Kinship is a favourite theme of Rona Munro's, resulting in explorations of the story's relationships - those of Ace and Kara, the Doctor and the Master, and the Doctor and Ace. Sophie Aldred's Ace has been one of the more involved **Doctor Who** companions, more than a mere foil for McCoy's Time Lord. She has been a central element of three of the stories this season, revealing more about her background and her character in a cleverer way than a myriad of fan essays. Ace is the character most involved with the planet (other than Anthony Ainley's Master). She announces "I belong here", and befriends one of its inhabitants, Kara, her "hunting sister". She knows the dangers inherent in her relationship with this alien being ("Would you kill me?" Ace asks, "How fast can you run?" Kara replies) just as she knows the dangers of travelling with the Doctor, but they are dangers she relishes. At one stage in episode three she asks the Doctor a question which goes unanswered: "Doctor, will I stay like this?" Perhaps McCoy's increasingly omnipotent Time Lord doesn't know everything, afterall.

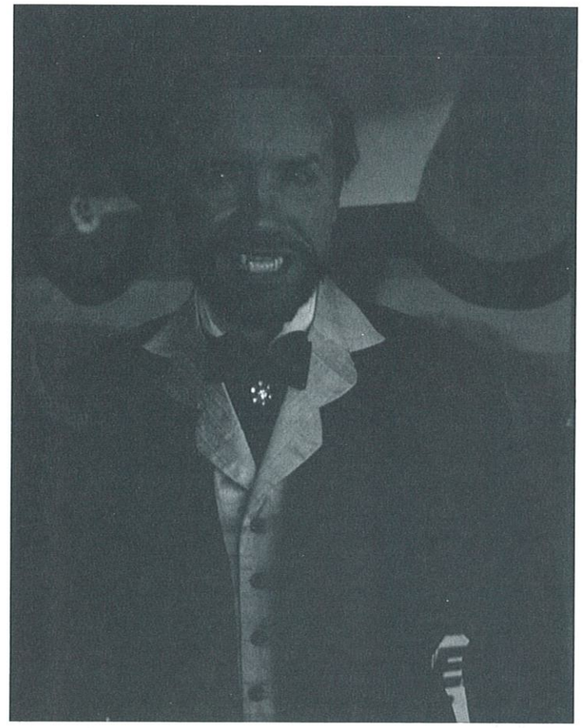
The relationship between those arch enemies, the Doctor and the Master, is also explored by Munro. "An evil genius, one of my oldest, deadliest enemies", is the Doctor's unfortunately glib, comic-book assessment of his once dangerous nemesis. We haven't seen the Master since his tussle with Colin Baker at the end of his **Trial**, but he seems to have lost all his cunning and guile, characteristics that you might expect the Master to emphasise in his new animalistic state. In fact, he seems something of a dim chap altogether. Does he really need the Doctor to rescue him from the planet ? Can't he figure out how to return to Earth himself ? Why go back to Earth anyway ? To steal the Doctor's TARDIS ? Was he so "bewitched" by the planet's effects that he's lost his marbles ? Whatever, when he gets back to Earth he returns quickly to the cardboard Ainley Master we know only too well from Nathan-Turner's brand of **Doctor Who**. Can we really expect the Master to succeed in taking over the world with a gang of teenagers in tow, especially when they run off at the sight of a woman on a horse! The story would have fared far better without him. There is nothing his character adds to the drama. His absence may have allowed for more exploration of the ideas developed in the story, instead of concentrating on a stock **Doctor Who** conflict which, by its very nature, cannot have any resolution. Actors may come and go, but the Doctor/Master battle goes on, and the outcome is predictably the same. As with all formula television, part of the pleasure in a Master story is to see what he's up to this time, how he gets defeated and what peril he is left in at the end of the tale. **Survival** didn't really disappoint in this respect, but it does get tiresome after a time, especially when formulaic elements stifle real orginal creativity.

Ace and the Doctor's relationship changes through the story, as Munro assesses the series main characters. He's not adverse to using Ace in order to return to Earth, even though he knows the risk she runs of transforming forever. It's the kind of act we could have expected the Doctor, in the past, to do all he could to dissuade her from carrying out. The reasoning behind this willingness to potentially sacrifice his companion is not clear. Neither McCoy's acting, nor Munro's script, put any force behind the conflict between the Mater and the Doctor, so the battle isn't important enough to justify sacrificing Ace's humanity. McCoy, in his conflict with Ainley, lacks the anger (and his is an "angry Doctor") that either Davison, or even Colin Baker, brought to the battle.

One of the continually disturbing aspects of **Doctor Who** in the past few years is the metamorphosis of the Time Lord into a Superhero. The Doctor's standard 'costume' during the Nathan-Turner era was the first worrying sign of this trend, but Andrew Cartmel's development of the character (mysterious nature, an unbelievable omnipotence, previously unknown powers) takes it into uncharted waters. The first warning sign was last year's "Defender of Gallifrey" speech the Doctor delivered to Davros in **Remembrance of the Daleks**. In **Survival**, the Doctor walks away from a fatal motorbike crash without even a scratch, while Midge dies in rather a sorry state. It was one of those impossible-to-escape-from explosions (and the director didn't even cheat, simply showing the explosion in very long shot) which, nevertheless, the Doctor walks away from. He's also developed some sort of Vulcan nerve pinch, if the Doctor's incapacitation of Patterson is anything to go by (a finger to the forehead!). Bring back the explorer of the universe, and do away with the infallible and omnipotent righter-of-wrongs, would be my advice to an aspiring independent producer.

While Rona Munro's script is very good (although it may have undergone one too many rewrites) and Alan Wareing's skilful and imaginative direction saves a lot of the sillier scenes, **Survival** fails, not because of the story or the ideas, but because of the execution. The most laughable aspect was the stuffed moggy, or what the production team have tagged an "animatronic creature". The mix of fake stuffed pussy and genuine felines simply didn't work and produced much laughter in the audience I watched the first episode with! The shot of a real cat watching the milkman early in the second episode showed that it is possible to use a real cat for those scenes. There was no need for the snarling fake. Secondly, the yellow contact lenses were probably enough to convey the alien nature of the animal instinct contaminations. The fake fangs, again, were one unnecessary step too many. Ainley had trouble speaking clearly as the plastic gift from a left-over Christmas cracker slid around in his mouth. The Cheetah people themselves look simply silly upon first sight, but there is probably no other way to achieve creatures that would be as agile. Admittedly they do have more than a touch of the Care Bears about them, but it was an acceptable visualisation of an interesting race of creatures.

Those points aside, there were many successful visualisations of the script. The alien planet was nicely realised, escaping from much of the Dorset sand pit look which has dogged many a **Doctor Who** alien environment. Unfortunately, a new cliché has entered the series' visual grammar - the pink sky! The only way to tell it's really alien these days is to add a funny-coloured sky via paintbox **(Mindwarp, Time and the Rani)**. That aside, the long shots of the landscape with its smoking craters and bubbling fissures was largely successful. Many feature films have showcased worse alien planets. The final struggle between the Doctor and the Master on the planet had more than a touch of



B B C(c)

Dante's Inferno about it.

The performers pulled off some convincing characterisations. Why Julian Holloway had to affect a Scottish accent I'll never know. Surely not because of the Glaswegian 'hardman' cliché (I could take offence, being a Glaswegian myself!). He could just as easily have been a 'tough' EastEnder or Northerner! If you want a Scottish accent, cast a Scottish actor! His performance was very good, accent aside, as he struggled with the reality of his trip to an alien planet and his encounter with an environment in which he might find it difficult to survive. The Cheetah people were not about to listen to his "I was the only one who ate the worm stew" spiel.

Survival is not the cat-astrophe I thought it was the first time I watched it. Unlike much throwaway television, it does repay another viewing. Unfortunately, it fails as a successful piece of television, then, as most of the already rather small audience will only watch it once, as it is broadcast. **Doctor Who** has got to catch an attentive audience, which it simply won't do by confusing them **(Ghost Light**, the end of **The Curse of Fenric...)** or not giving them a strong enough hook on which to make them want to watch the following week, as was the case with **Survival**. That's unfortunate, because if the audience had stayed with the drama their perseverance would have been repaid.

The climax of **Survival** was a nicely realised variant on the deadly enemies in peril cliché, which most viewers would have simply enjoyed. The story gave viewers enough to think about, was sufficiently different from the other stories this season to keep their attention, and had few of the fannish in-references or overt continuity that has bedeviled much of **Doctor Who** in recent years. That's all very well, but it did have a number of negative points which may have prevented a casual viewer becoming engaged with the drama: a slow first episode, with no hook; the clichéd villain of the Master; and a number of silly elements (the stuffed cat, the teeth, even some of the dialogue). **Survival** was, then, a traditional eighties/JNT **Doctor Who** story, at once both innovative in terms of ideas, but trapped within its own continuity and terms of reference; looking to some progressive science fiction, while falling into many of the traps of formula television; using convincing special effects and sequences (the planet and the disappearances), as well as duff effects which make the audience laugh and the fans cry.

All in all, I didn't enjoy **Survival** as it was broadcast, but came to appreciate it on second viewing. Most viewers didn't get the chance to appreciate the good points of the final **Doctor Who** story for some time. That's a shame, and there's only one place to lay the blame...

BRIAN J. ROBB

YOUR VIEW

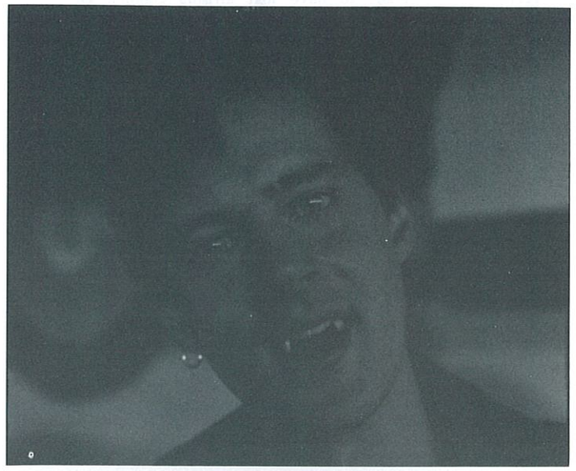
PAUL REEKS: JNT has leapt onto the festive bandwagon with his latest pre-Christmas pantomime. A gentle, child-like mixture of Puss 'n Boots and Alice (or should that be Ace) in Wonderland combined to bring us an undiluted 25 minutes of sheer nonsensical **crap**. I refer, of course, to episode one of **Survival**. The principle character, Doctor Slapstick, is a renegade from the Max Sennett studios. He spends most of the episode chasing a furry black pyjama case in the shape of a cat. My neighbour's eight-year-old grandson found this hilarious and wanted to know if Spit the dog was in it too. In order to trap the strange black pussy Doctor Slapstick decides to entice it into the open with some Furry Puss-Cat Chunks. But first he must obtain some. Enter shop-keepers Teedle Dee and Tweedle Dum. Then it's audience participation time: 'When is a cat not a cat?' asks Doctor Slapstick. 'When it appears on **Doctor Who**' we shout back! Not to be outdone, Doctor Slapstick asks his leading lady and a munchkin friend 'Can you smell that?' They obviously can't, but we can of course. It is the unmistakable putrid stench of a once-great television programme gone rotten. Later, the leading lady is transported, in a white flash, to never-never land where nothing ever changes - it's still the same old yarn. Meanwhile Doctor Slapstick has cornered puss on a brick wall. Crawling along the top in order to grab it, Doctor Slapstick is himself grabbed by the ubiquitous military buffoon Sergeant Patterson. This enables Doctor Slapstuck to perform the obligatory prat-fall expected of him. In a blinding flash both are transported to never-never land where they are surrounded by several hearth-rugs who force them backwards towards a ramshackled old dwelling housing the Doctor's most feared opponent, non-other than the dreaded Baron Hardup. 'Doctor...what an unexpected surprise', purrs the Baron. Thus ends episode one of John Nathan-Turner's swansong, an offering which stands for everything he represents, but which **Doctor Who** should not be. Has he really gone this time? I for one will not believe he has until a new name appears as producer on the end credits. He's probably laughing at us by titling his alleged final production **Survival** - 'Extinction' would have been more appropriate.

ANDREW BOOTH: **Survival** suffered by being taken down a similar path to the one Season 24 travelled - and both ended up in a cul-de-sac. It had a torturous banality and an absence of rigidly structured plot. Just how did 'The Professor' deduce so many things from a tin of cat food? All we seemed to get was the continual stressing of the theme: survival of the fittest. I hated what I can only describe as a castrated and anaesthetised Master, given a pathetic exit which was another annoying 'is he or isn't he' get out. Why was the last production team so scared of killing off established characters (witness the Brig's resurrection in **Battlefield**)?

EDWARD JOLLEY: **Survival** was not up to the standard set by its predecessors, although it was distinctly superior to **Battlefield**. The Master was somewhat wasted and his plan seemed insignificant. The first episode was a bit too jokey for my liking and the cliffhanger extremely predictable. Things improved in the second episode, although the usual lack of explanation was apparent. The Doctor's survival of the motorbike crash would have been unrealistic in any situation but this was made worse by showing the entire explosion in long-shot. Absolutely nothing was thrown clear and this fact was apparent on first viewing. In addition, the moment during the fight with the Master when the Doctor's eyes glowed, thus explaining his return to the TARDIS, was rushed and easily missed. In all, **Survival** was a disappointing end to the season.

SIMON COLENUTT: Take some cats, a carry-on refugee, cats, a distant relative of Basil Brush, cats, a colourful alien sandpit (with added cats), some heavy-handed symbolism, cats, an unconvincing explosion (which killed one and seriously damaged the crease in the trousers of another), the Master, and an unbelievably flat ending. Mix with the strong input from Wareing and Aldred, add a few sneers from McCoy (expression no.195; mean-biker look) then serve at the end of a love-it-or-loathe-it season. The result: the epitome of the late 80's 'bubblegum' **Doctor Who**. (I liked it!).

NIGEL SMERDON: **Survival** opened very well with a somewhat laid-back and subtle part one: nicely-paced and balanced. Interest was maintained throughout the rest of the story without a great deal of 'event' - the Master was quiet and effective, Karra was well-realised and acted and Sophie got a chance to do something special; she looked



good and the chase scenes were well done. Sylvester was ok but didn't particularly shine. The main problem with this story was that it didn't really have an ending - it just ran out of steam and stopped. A pity, especially as it seems to happen so often these days indicating a fundamental problem somewhere along the line.

PAUL MASON: For the second time this season Alan Wareing has come up trumps with the excellent imagery one has come to expect after his two previous excellent **Who** stories. It would be interesting to see how much of this imagery was inherent in the original script as, so far, Alan's stories have all contained strong images (the clowns' hearse, Light and now horse-riding Cheetah people). Ace is much improved this season; at last a companion who can carry parts of ths story, a contrast to other recent companions who can only be described as bland cyphers. The only let-down of this story was the seemingly half-hearted attempts at humour.

MARTIN JACKSON: **Survival** was another good story ending a mostly excellent (if somewhat confusing) season. The plot was simple and effective and there were some good performances from the cast, especially Ace. The special effects were impressive, as was the background music, which isn't something that usually stands out in a story. My only complaint is that the Master (as usual) was under-used, almost as if he had been added as an afterthought.

LAURENCE PIPER: **Survival** was undoubtedly the best story of the season. It was original in ideas, had good acting (with the Master being used well for the first time in ages). Visually it looked fresh with exteriors and effects being exciting to the eye, and no bad, tacky-looking aliens either. In my opinion this is the first story to make successful use of the three-episode format (the others tending to be too long to be regarded as a 'brief' interlude like two-parters, or not long enough to provide enough to involve oneself in, like a four+-parter). Each episode's pace was just right with events unfolding in an intriguing way but leaving enough twists to keep us guessing up until the end of episode three. I especially liked the constant metaphor throughout of it being a dog-eat-dog world where only the strong survive (a refernce to the climate of 80's Britain perhaps?). All the characters worked well and Ace's background was explained in a credible manner, and there was a nice balance between serious drama and a quirky strangeness - you were never **sure** if Ace was going to stay that way. In all, the most solidly-structured script for some time, with everything being clearly explained and not hiding behind complexity for its own sake like **Ghost Light**, which was an enjoyable and atmospheric little ditty but baffling, and therefore not compulsive viewing. A nice story for JNT to bow out on and I hope that Rona Munro gets a chance at writing for the show again...

* STAR * RATINGS	*
SCRIPT	***
ORIGINALITY	***
DIRECTION	****½
ACTING	****
SETS	***½
COSTUMES	***½
MONSTERS	**
SPECIAL EFFECTS	***½
MUSIC	***
OVERALL STORY	***
TOTAL = 66%	

NO ST:NG IN 1990

DUE to the vast amount of money involved, the BBC still haven't finalised a deal with Paramount to screen 'Star Trek: The Next Generation'.

The BBC's Purchased Programmes department told DWB it was unlikely that season one would be shown this year because Paramount are still maximising profits from video sales.

The main reason for the vast cost involved is because Paramount will only sell ST:NG as part of a package also comprising the original **Star Trek** series, cartoon series and feature films. Michael Grade's Channel 4 have also bid for the package but it is unlikely they will be able to raise the funds, while ITV's apparent lack of interest in this potential ratings-winning package remains a mystery.

STAR TREK REGENERATION ?

In the wake of the box office and critical failure of William Shatner's **Star Trek V: The Final Frontier**, the **Trek** motion picture series is considered to be on its last legs. Number five has paved the way, with its reconciliation between the Klingons and the Federation, for the universe in which **Star Trek: The Next Generation** takes place.

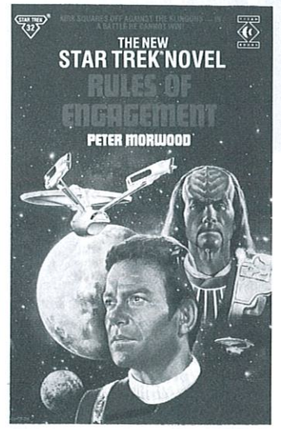
Naturally Paramount are reluctant to let the money-spinning film series die so easily. Paramount executives have worried for the past few years about the ageing original cast (now baldly going...), their continuing ability to portray their famous characters, and their waning box office power. Their replacement is not far off.

Paramount have several options which are being discussed at the moment. One is to recast the film series with the cast from TV's **Star Trek: The Next Generation**, launching Patrick Stewart and co onto a series of big-screen voyages. The new TV series has been running for three seasons and has clocked up almost as many episodes as the original.

A further option being considered was one first postulated several years ago after **Star Trek III: The Search for Spock**. The idea is for a series based on the idea of Young **Star Trek**, to be entitled **Star Fleet Academy**, chronicling the adventures of the student Jim Kirk, Bones McCoy and Spock. This idea has now been revived as a possibility for **Star Trek VI: Star Fleet Academy**, to be directed by William Shatner. The original **Trek** cast may feature merely in cameo rôles.

SHATNER'S LIFE

William Shatner was the subject of the December 27th Christmas edition of This is Your Life on ITV. Apart from the presence of Leonard Nimoy, **Star Trek** provided surprisingly little input with T.J.Hooker faring better!



Book no.32 in the 'Star Trek' range - Rules of Engagement - is published by Titan Books on February 22nd priced £2.99. (ISBN 1-85286-281-5).

NEW STORYTELLER

JOHN HURT has been replaced on the new series of Jim Henson's 'The Storyteller' on ITV.

The new weaver of tales and spinner of yarns is none other than the Singing Detective himself, Michael Gambon.

The new series is subtitled The Greek Myths, and instead of tackling middle-European folk tales, it turns its attention to ancient mythology.

All the classics feature in the series brought to life through animation and animatronics.

The full series comprises:

Perseus and the Minotaur, directed by John Madden

Thesues and the Gorgon, directed by David Garfath

Orpheus and Eurydice, directed by Tony Smith

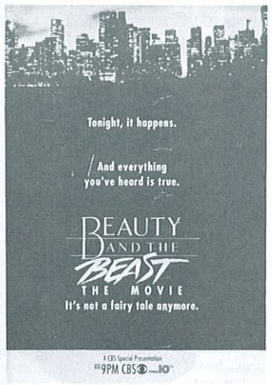
Daedalus and Icarus, directed by Paul Welland.

The series' executive producer is Jim Henson, production by Duncan Kenworthy and the script editor is Anthony Minghella. MJ

NEW LOOK FOR 'BEAUTY AND THE BEAST'

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST returned for its much-publicised and controversial two-hour special on December 12th.

And just to reiterate its change of direction into a 'gothic gangster saga', CBS placed the ad below in TV Guide magazine. The new series sees the demise of Catherine played by Linda Hamilton and the arrival of Jo Anderson as Diana.



THE END FOR 'MURDER ON THE MOON'

The Brigitte Nielsen/Julian Sands star vehicle **Murder on the Moon** was retitled for broadcast on the CBS network in the United States to 'Murder by Moonlight'. Despite tinkering with the name the film was a ratings and critical failure, wiping out any chance for the proposed sequel/series. MJ

RATINGS ROUND-UP

The Chronicles of Narnia has again done very well with its second series - adaptions of **Prince Caspian** and **Voyage of the Dawn Treader** in six episodes - achieving audiences around the nine million mark putting it at around number 40 in the top 100 with 17% of potential viewers on Sunday afternoons tuning in.

Beauty and the Beast finished its curtailed run of selected second series episodes (suitable for family viewing) less popular than when it started with 5.7 millions placing it at 83 with 11% of the available audience. **Land of the Giants** continues to pull in 4.5 million making it Channel 4's highest rated programme (Brookside's figures are combined with the repeats) while **The Invisible Man** on BBC2 has been netting 4.05m with 3.90m tuning in for **Red Dwarf.**

Susan Polan will be back next month for a Review Special...

COMMENT

ANYBODY hoping for a repeat of the BBC's 'The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe' looks set for a disappointment.

The serial's release as a two-tape video set is part of a regrettable trend on Auntie's part of releasing popular, quality shows straight onto video rather than repeating them.

The Beeb's attitude seems to be that if people are willing to pay for it, why repeat it and give it to them for nothing ? This, of course, neatly side-steps the fact that licence-fee payers have **already** paid for the Corporation's output!

BEEB'S HASTE

In the age of the controversial Broadcasting White Paper and the index-linked licence fee, the Beeb's haste to adopt the ways of the market place is increasingly over-ruling any last vestiges of public service broadcasting.

The absence of a Narnia repeat (which would once have been guaranteed as a lead-in to this autumn's **Prince Caspian** and **The Voyage of the Dawn Treader**), is particularly galling to video collectors who prefer their recordings untouched by BBC Video editors' hands, since the choice is now between the video release (on which the episodes are joined together as with **Doctor Who**) or the serial's only showing, which was marred by a break in transmission during episode two.

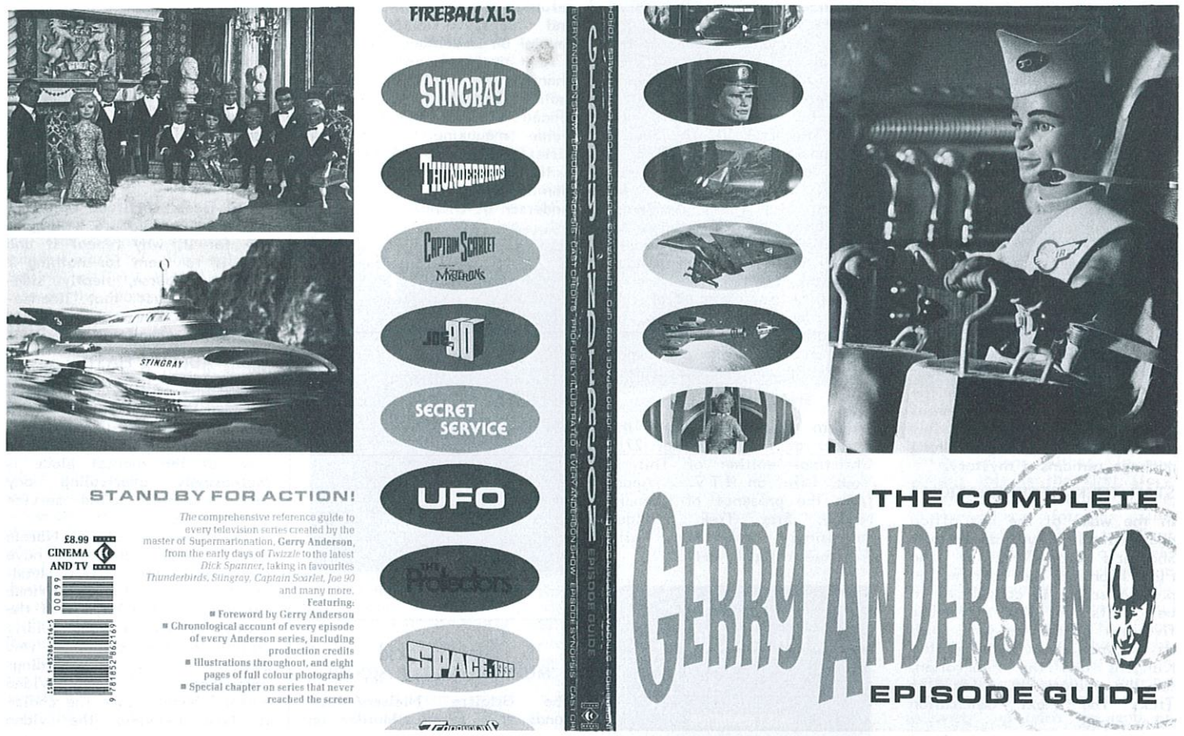
Incidentally, it is interesting to note the tapes in this and **The Box of Delights** two-tape set each run approximately 83 minutes. Total time per set is roughly 166 minutes at £14.99. The **Doctor Who** two-tape set, **The Daleks**, runs only 25 minutes longer but costs £5 more!

All this and **still** no sign of the 1984 criminally unrepeated Barry Letts/Terrance Dicks version on **The Invisible Man.**

There's no justice!

Tim Munro

THE COMPLETE COMPLETISTS' GUIDE


STAND BY FOR ACTION!
The comprehensive reference guide to every television series created by the master of Supermarionation, Gerry Anderson, from the early days of Twizzle to the latest Dick Spanner, taking in favourites Thunderbirds, Stingray, Captain Scarlet, Joe 90 and many more.
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EPISODE GUIDE

DO MISTAKES get up your nose ? Well, they sure get up mine! Especially when you've just shelled out nine quid for a tome which everyone's been swearing will be the best thing since sliced bread...and ultimately isn't.

Let's start at the beginning, though, and look at the pros and cons of the book in question, before embarking upon a look at the general whys and wherefores of how a reference book cannot be all things to all people.

The Complete Gerry Anderson Episode Guide by Adam Pirani (Titan Books, £8.99) is a very nicely put together book of about 160 pages, some of which are in colour and in total contains going on for 500 photographs, many of which the average Andersonphile will find to be new. For the different television series which Anderson has handled in his long and memorable career - from **Twizzle** to **Dick Spanner P.I.** - there's an episode guide which usually comprises principle cast, guest cast, main crew, synopsis, writer and director. All in all, for the casual nostalgia buff or the video merchant who wants to see what he's got left to collect, it's not a bad little tome.

But for somebody who's been looking for the ultimate reference work, the final word on the subject, the book they can rely on to plug those few remaining gaps in the world of Anderson...this ain't the book.

A cursory glance through the pages reveals all the usual curses and clangers of hurried research. First off, the author doesn't realise that **Thunderbirds** in fact ran for two seasons and not one, and so has merely printed voice artistes to season one and crew to season two. Not terribly clever! **The Secret Service** is referred to as **Secret Service** throughout for some reason, and that reason, one later suspects, is because the author hasn't actually **seen** the show (the writer thinks the Minimiser is hidden in a briefcase, it is in fact hidden in a book and the briefcase is used purely to carry Matthew off on missions).

And then all the old chestnuts turn up. Episodes like **Attack of the Alligators!** and **Kill Straker!** which lack their unique punctuation. Mission X-14 instead of **Mission X-41.** The wrong writer credits on the last five episodes of **Joe 90.** The perpetuation of the myth that writer and director credits for **Supercar** are totally unobtainable - well I found them with ease a few years back. And since the last 26 non-Anderson episodes of **Torchy** are not even **mentioned,** I found it hard to make myself believe some of the other claims made about **Twizzle** in the previous chapter.

There are lots of other little annoying errors. I could go on for ages. But basically what I'm saying is that there are so many mistakes - and basic ones at that - that it's clear the people involved just didn't care and so didn't check. The main source of errors comes from that double-edged weapon, press releases. Now, sometimes press releases can be fascinating documents, full of never used ideas, ammended cast and crew, and the like. However, unless you're 100% sure on the final product, these are of no use at all as they're invariably reprinted as fact and those 'in-the-know' will merely say 'Ahhh, all this bloke's done is reprinted press releases..."

Research is a tricky business unless you work at a TV station or a TV publication and so can get carté blanche to walk into archives and wade through official paperwork back to the year dot (actually, **anyone** can access the BBC's official files, but the costs at their written archives are astronomical!). Strangely enough, one of the best sources of research material for those not lucky enough to cross the bounds of officialdom are Radio Times and TV Times (or its 60's variants) which - unless it's an imported show - will normally give you cast, credits and synopses. Still you can encounter problems, though. On ITV, film series in the 60's were seldom networked and even if you know there were 26 episodes, that 26th son-of-a-bitch will often prove hard to track down in your region. And of course the guides are printed in advance of transmission, so you have trouble knowing about postponements and replacements, etc. That's when you need the aid of an old hand TV fanatic of the sort who logged every show he saw in the 60's with date, title and writer credits. And there ain't many of them about. A few, but not many.

At a time when industry seems geared up for 'total quality', maybe the time is right to assess TV-related reference material for quality. What do people want in reference material ? Do people care about its accuracy ? Well, from the letters we get at **Time Screen,** yes, people do seem to care and whenever we draw an absolute blank on the episode guide entry there's usually somebody out there ready to helpfully write in and supply the missing data. CMS's **In-Vision** is also highly popular, despite its expense, because it is a detailed and reliable source of **Doctor Who** reference.

It was encouraging, therefore, to see John Freeman start to run correction columns called 'Additional Input' in Marvel's **Doctor Who Magazine** a few months back, and often now an item will be checked by other writers for accuracy. Most delightful of all is a new document John has prepared for his writers giving them guidelines on accuracy, style and correct use of titles. Not only that, but he's generated a list of which stories are **episodes** and which are **parts** and which have a numeral and which are numbers. First one I've seen (e.g. **Spearhead from Space** Episode 4, **The Leisure Hive** Part Three, **The Ice Warriors** Two, etc.).

So, what is an ideal episode guide ? That's a very personal thing, but here's my shot at it and no doubt the vociferous readership of **DWB** will amend their own conditions in the letters page. An initial overview of a show first of all is essential, outlining things like style, format, characters, influences, media of production (e.g. film or VT), creative staff, running time, popularity, appeal, etc. Then you want regular cast list, and then principle crew list for each season (producers, story editors, music, designers, etc.).

For an individual episode entry I'd go for on-screen title (with correct punctuation, e.g. **Who's Who???**), transmission date (tricky for US or ITV), writer, director, additional cast, notation if regular cast were absent, and a synopsis (which is either long enough to give a complete rundown of the show from the first murder to the last corny gag of the tag scene, or alternatively a short teaser so as not to ruin the twist ending of an episode). As an addendum to each entry, there could then also be production notes peculiar to a certain episode - should the text be available. Shooting and recording dates in an appendix are also nice, and cast listings of extras - if available - could be placed separately (never mix in with credited cast!).

With the spate of SF TV-related guide books now available, let's have a quick look at which the various ones have to offer...

The Complete Avengers by Dave Rogers (Boxtree, £9.95). How it should be done. Contains shooting dates for most episodes, production order, good synopses, lots of behind-the-scenes material, etc. Also material on merchandise, the stage play and the radio shows. Drawbacks: incomplete cast listings on some episodes and some inaccurate titles.

The Official Batman Batbook by Joel Eisner (Titan Books, £6.95). Another pretty comprehensive book with full synopses, full cast lists, crew, production order, transmission dates...and lots and lots of behind-the-scenes production notes. And it's well illustrated, with a whole host of trivia facts thrown in too.

The Official Doctor Who and the Daleks Book by John Peel (St.Martin's Press, $12.95). How it **shouldn't** be done. Inaccurate production details, poor layout, inconsistent cast lists (e.g. extras included on some stories, not others), horribly incomplete merchandise guide and repetition of material. Some classic howlers in this tome, which is a pity as the chapters on the original storyline and the US pilot are good.

Doctor Who - The Programme Guide by Jean Marc Lofficier (Target Books, £1.99). A very nice updated book which has eradicated most of the howlers from the first edition of 1981 - although serial BBB is still referred to as 'The Silurains' for some strange reason! The major problems here are sloppy layout of episode titles (pages 33 and 39), but what there is is generally accurate. Cast listings are erratic, at times including extras as well as credited cast. Basic format of title, writer, director, dates, cast and synopsis is used with no shooting dates and little background material.

Fantastic Television by Gary Gerani with Paul H. Schulman (Titan, £7.95). An overview of the media containing episode indexes to thirteen US and UK series. These indexes give only title, writer, director, guest cast and three line synopses, but still a useful volume.

The Complete Lost in Space Book by John Peel (Pioneer Books, $17.95). As a combination of the ubiquitous Files series, far better value for money. Reliable writer and director credits in general, cast listings, good synopses and also some interesting technical notes and observations. Good material on the unscreened pilot too. Drawbacks: Very poor printing and bad photographic material.

The Man From U.N.C.L.E. by Jon Heitland (Titan Books, £7.95). A very well illustrated and superbly researched book, although here the episode guides relegated to the appendices fail to include full cast listings - although shooting dates and crew down to editor are given. The synopses are also very short and to the >12

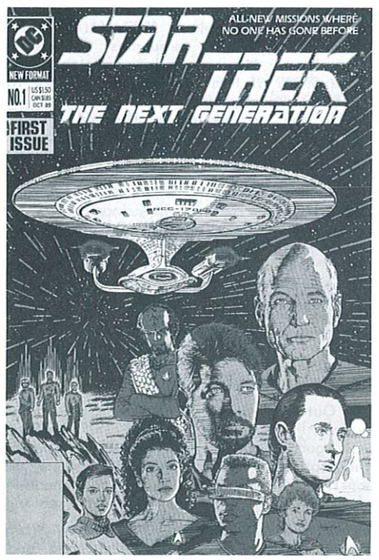
THE NEW GENERATION OF **STAR TREK** COMICS

IN AUGUST 1988, DC Comics' 'Star Trek' title suddenly disappeared off the shelves.

No reason was given at the time, although it now appears that in trying to secure monthly titles for both **Star Trek** and **Star Trek: The Next Generation,** DC's legal team had fallen into pitched battle against the forces of the Paramount Federation. On the surface everyone was smiles. "We can think of no-one better than DC to produce the **Star Trek** titles..." "This is merely renegotiation with our friends at Paramount..." You get the idea ? What really went on in those six months is anyone's guess. It may well have been friendly, but you don't spend all that time just shaking hands!

Everything back on the level again, work re-started early this year. Having spent February discussing story ideas for both titles, the priority suddenly became **Star Trek V** (the movie adaption), especially when the film's première was moved up to June 9th. Even by drastically cutting the page count (64 to 48 pages), DC were in trouble. The adaption eventually appeared on the 29th!

By this time, work was progressing on the re-launch of **Star Trek** and the introduction of the **ST:NG** monthly title (it had previously been a six issue mini-series after the start of the TV series). Peter David was writing **Star Trek** with art by James W. Fry and Arne Starr (friend of **ST:NG**'s Wil Weaton). Michael Jan Friedman took the story reigns of **ST:NG,** with art by Pablo Marcos. Things were not as easy as they had been, though. Gene Roddenberry's trouble-shooter, Richard Arnold, determined what was consistent (and what was not) with known **Star Trek** legend. A consequence of this has been the dropping of the original-to-comics cast (a total of 7) from the **Star Trek** title and a return to "the original seven member cast" (funny - I thought the Enterprise had a crew of 500 ?). Also the events of **Star Trek** have also to be consistent with the new film. Likewise, **ST:NG** with the second season



(officially not seen in Britain yet).

The first issues of both titles are now available in Britain. The **ST:NG** title is likely to be much-appreciated by those of us **still** waiting for CIC to get round to releasing season two on video, especially as this has become known as the 'character building' season. In this case **ST:NG** the comic book really does journey where no Brit has gone before...

Robin Selby

INTRODUCING... **THE BATMAN!**

C4(c)

FORGET Michael Keaton and 'Batman'(1989). Forget Adam West and Burt Ward in the camp 'Batman' TV series from the sixties. The real Batman and Robin appeared in 1943 in a 15-chapter cliffhanger film serial, played by Lewis Wilson as the caped crusader and Douglas Croft as his youthful crime-fighting sidekick.

This early effort at putting **The Batman** on screen is often forgotten, and so it is all credit to Channel 4 for reviving the memory when they screened all 15 chapters over the 15 days of Christmas and providing a chance to savour the outrageous antics of the first dynamic duo.

The Columbia Pictures Corporation had been producing cliffhanger serials since 1937, farming out the production chores to small independent companies while handling the distribution themselves. Many Saturday morning cinema audiences thrilled to the exploits of Frank Buck who battled the 'Jungle Menace', and the thriller/comedy serial 'The Iron Claw'.

With the success of the **Batman** comic strips and magazines it wasn't long before Columbia decided to produce a serial adaption. By the time it reached production the Second World War was underway, so the producers decided to maximise audiences by giving the adventure tale a wartime twist. This meant dropping some of the comic strips' more over the top villains like The Joker, replacing him with a cliché-ridden (and in today's terms racist) portrayal of a Japanese master criminal.

The first thrilling episode, 'The Electrical Brain', introduced the Batman (whose Bat Cave is haunted by real bats!) and his associates through a narrative voice over (as did so many of these serials). The serial pits Batman and Robin up against the dastardly Doctor Daka (J. Carrol Naish), who is the head of a band of baddies known as the League of Dishonoured Men. Daka has created a machine (the Electrical Brain of the title) which turns peace-loving patriotic Americans into mindless zombies! Batman infiltrates the gang who are stealing radium to power their weapons.

Every episode of the 15-chapter saga of the Batman's battle with Dr.Daka ended with Batman caught in yet another impossible-to-escape-from perilous situation. Nevertheless, by the following instalment he had escaped, once again, often because the film makers 'cheated' the viewers by creating implausible escape routes from certain death. The cliffhanger on the first chapter is fair enough: Batman falls off the top of a building to 'certain death', but in the opening of chapter two he lands on a window-washing scaffold. Looking closely at the cliffhanger, though, the hooks of the scaffold are visible, although it's not clear at that point what they are. Later cliffhangers just get sillier as Batman walks away from fatal plane crashes!

The budget for the serial was less than $100,000, resulting in bargain basement Batsuits made from cloaks, baggy pants and stitched on ears. It also has to be said that Lewis Wilson was no muscle man, so his skin-tight suit is less than convincing when one is supposed to believe that Batman is capable of overpowering many men. At least Michael Keaton faked his bulges!

The serial's 15 episodes were all directed by Lambert Hillyer, more often used to helming cowboy pictures and Western serials than chronicling the fantastic escapades of superheroes. He was also the man behind two of Universal's best known horror flicks from the 30's, Dracula's Daughter and The Invisible Ray.

Despite its limitations, the serial is an entertaining attempt to film a **Batman** adventure and it did have a great effect on the comics of the time. The Bat Cave appeared for the first time in the 1943 film serial, and reappeared later in the comic adventures. The serial itself, made over a period of time, and not all necessarily scripted when filming began, is laden with continuity errors. Although set in Gotham City, Batman receives a letter addressed to Los Angeles and the League Order without anyone noticing. The way into Daka's hideout is by pressing your hand against an x-ray plate, but no matter whose hand (left of right) is pressed against the panel, the same left hand appears on the x-ray picture!

The serial, however, was well-received, but it wasn't until 1949 that a follow-up serial was made. After the success of that year's Superman adventure serial, Columbia returned to the Caped Crusader with **The New Adventures of Batman and Robin.** The leads were recast, with Robert Lowery now donning the ears and John Duncan with the 'R' emblazoned on his chest. This time Batman was up against a villain called The Wizard who planned universal domination through his deadly and threatening Remote Control Machine! This 15-chapter epic, whose plot changed about half way through, was the last on-screen manifestation of the Caper Crusader until 1966 heralded the arrival of the camp Adam West TV series on American television. A feature film was stitched together from a couple of the new TV episodes and released the same year, while Columbia competed with an edited re-release of **The New Adventures of Batman and Robin.**

The Channel Four screening of 1943's **The Batman** over Christmas is the first time it's been seen in this country (although both that serial and the 1949 sequel are around, though on unofficial video tape). We can only hope that Channel Four will treat us to the 1949 sequel as it's even funnier!

MARK JAMES

< 11 point, but still a very fine book.

The Outer Limits - The Official Companion by David J. Schow and Jeffrey Frentzen (Ace Books, $8.95). Excellent. Well researched with good background material surrounding the episode guides. Thorough cast lists, behind-the-scenes shots, a chapter on the abortive spin-off, shooting dates, unmade episodes and a quotation of the Control Voice narration for each segment.

The Prisoner Companion by Matthew White & Jaffer Ali (Warner Books, $9.95). Bitty, ill researched and full of padding. No attempted analysis of production to any great degree. The episode guide - in US tx order - is reasonable although the tendency to get episode titles wrong is alarming.

The Prisoner & Danger Man by Dave Rogers (Boxtree, £12.95). Good accurate synopsis and usually complete cast lists to both shows, with high detail in the case of **The Prisoner.** However, no transmission dates, no shooting dates and very little in the way of production notes. Well illustrated and generally accurate.

Le Prisonnier - Chef-d'oeuvre télévisionnaire by Alain Carrazé & Hélène Oswald (Huitième Art, approx. £40). As described in **DWB#70,** this is a beautiful book. Lavishly illustrated with over 250 glossy photos, most of which are new and most of which are in colour. Very detailed synopses but no detailed cast or crew listings. Superb chapter on production details. Unfortunately, the text is mainly in French.

Star Trek Credits - The Complete Credit Listing by Janet Quarton (ScoTpress, approx. £2). Amateur fan publication simply listing every credit, title, cast members, crew, etc. as given on screen in every episode. No synopses, no transmission details, no waffle. Worth its weight in gold over the professional works (like **The Star Trek Compendium** by Allan Asherman, Titan Books, £8.95) which tend to omit cast lists and crew details.

The Twilight Zone Companion by Marc Scott Zicree (Bantam, $14.95). Another excellent piece of research, inspiring the later **The Outer Limits** tome and along a very similar format, although it lacks some of the behind-the-scenes insight and shooting dates.

ANDREW PIXLEY

GERRY DAVIS ON HIS BID TO TAKE ON **DOCTOR WHO**

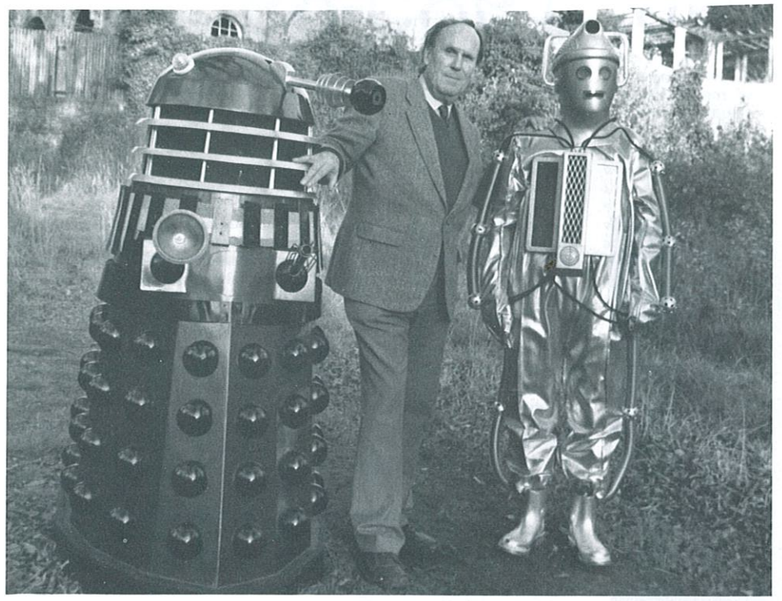


Photo: Esther Wyatt

GERRY DAVIS recently took a short break from teaching his oversubscribed screen writing course at the University of Southern California film school to fly over to Britain to negotiate with the BBC for the rights to make the next (27th) season of 'Doctor Who'.

Although things are still very much in their early stages, he remains quietly confident that he and his partner Terry Nation are in with a good chance.

This alliance has garnered considerable interest in America where several major companies including Fox TV, Columbia, the Turner Network, Walt Disney and Canadian Superchannel have all shown "serious interest" in financing the show and backing the partnership. Gerry is, however, insistent that an influx of corporate US Entertainment money will not alter the fundamental nature of this most "English" of shows as it is this very element that makes it so popular in America.

He sees **Doctor Who**'s biggest selling point as the characters and their interaction. "It is a character-based show - I want less pseudo science and more hard action. The Doctor must once again live on his ingenuity with his assistants taking up the action while he adopts a more indirect rôle."

Patrick Troughton was Gerry's favourite Doctor for the very good reason that he was very closely involved in formulating his character. "That was one of my strongest memories of **Who.** We were worried that when William Hartnell left the series people would stop watching, so the character of Troughton's Doctor was all important. There was a group of us sitting around in the office trying to devise the character, but this committee, including Sydney Newman, Innes Lloyd and myself, was getting nowhere. I could see Patrick getting more and more miserable. All actors hate indecision and I could feel him slipping away.

"Something had to be done, so in a rash moment I said 'All right, he is the one that has to act in it and I am the one that will have to edit it, so why not leave us to it?' To my total surprise everyone agreed and the office was cleared. Within half an hour Patrick and I had the character. I saw him as a kind of James Stewart as he appeared in Destry Rides Again - speaking in parables."

The larger budget US backing could provide would lead to much greater possibilities in producing a better product. "There would be far more location work, in the US, Canada, and over the world," Davis claims. "We certainly wouldn't be limited to the BBC gravel pit any more." However, this would not mean cutting the programme's ties with the BBC. "British production values are still some of the best in the world, and we would look to do the studio work using BBC facilities and the vast experience of their staff."

One idea, Davis suggests, would be to bring in an overall theme to the show which could run through the season, much like The Key to Time and Trial of a Time Lord seasons. "Each adventure could produce more clues in the overall quest - some would be dead ends leading the Doctor back to where he started, others would get him nearer the solution. This would bring back a much-needed element of suspense and danger. We would also pare down the proliferation of sub-plots and violence."

Davis remains enthusiastic about the future and is brimming with ideas for new projects, as well as the possibility of resurrecting his and Kit Pedler's famous 70's series **Doomwatch.** Bad luck has, however, frustrated some of his efforts. He was due to write Mad Max III but this came to a halt after the tragic death of its producer/director Byron Kennedy.

"Kennedy was the great white hope of the Australian film industry and a great fan of **Doctor Who.** The whole production crew were walking round in black the next day - it was one of the most remarkable things I have ever seen."

Gerry then went on to work on an NBC project called 2050, an ambitious project which would have enabled him to realise a vision of the future.

"The idea behind 2050 was that a day in the life of that year should be created 'live' on NBC, running for three hours across the evening's schedules complete with news flashes and commercials. Sony and General Motors both agreed to make commercials showing the things they thought they would be selling in that year.

"The whole thing was carefully structured with dramas and documentaries, and a wide range of institutions and companies were asked their opinions on where their interest would be in 2050."

Gerry spent eight months working on 2050 before NBC decided to pull the plug, apparently worried about viewers' - and therefore advertisers - sticking with this multi-million dollar investment for long enough for it to show a return.

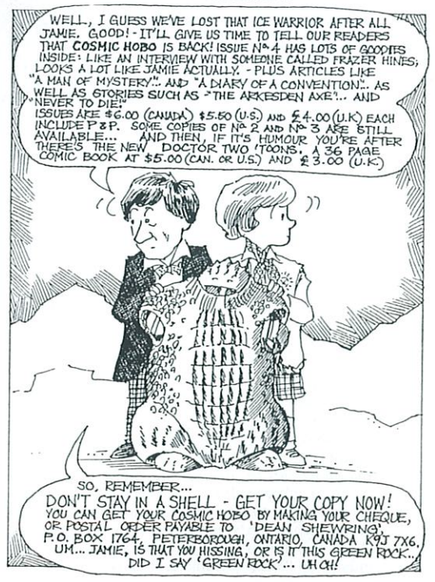
For the historically minded, however, Gerry gave us a selection of the news in 2050: "Robots are on strike for their rights, colonists from Mars have set out into deep space, and terrorists have blown up the Vatican with a nuclear bomb so shocking the world into disarming."

Gerry has now returned to America to sort out the US end of his bid to take on **Doctor Who** with his partner Terry Nation, and anticipates that things are still looking good. After all, who could withstand the combined forces of the Daleks and Cybermen?

ANDREW THOMAS

Gerry Davis is interviewed in depth about his time on 'Doctor Who' in the sixties in DWB#59...

- ADVERTISEMENT -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BRIGHTON BEACH MEMOIRS

Part two: 1985-89

IN THE WAKE of the announcement of the 1985 cancellation, issue 104 of DWM published a joint interview with John Nathan-Turner and script editor Eric Saward which, true to the spirit of editor Cefn Ridout's dynamic new editorial style (or perhaps the former's influence as the magazine's 'advisor'?), managed to avoid the subject until the penultimate paragraph of a five-page article that appeared to be deliberately as bland as possible.

In fact, this piece is only worth reading given a considerable amount of hindsight of the sort that would produce a wry smile on viewing the description of the JNT/Saward partnership as "one of the most durable in the show's history" or the warm praise that each lavishes on the other. There is certainly little comfort for those who have tended to shift the blame for the entire debacle on poor old Eric since there is never the slightest hint of Nathan-Turner being at all unsatisfied with his performance as script editor, just the opposite in fact! Take his discussion on his favourite story of Season 22, for example: "I think if I had to make a choice I'd say **Varos** because the whole video-nasty set-up was so clever and consequently it was a rounder show. But credit where it's due, that element was actually injected by Eric." Or how about the restructuring of the series into 45-minute episodes: "Yes, I think it did work. Inevitably when you change something that's been a tradition for such a long time, there's a kind of apprehension from the front office that it won't work...it would have been lovely to have done one more season in that slot to get it exactly right but we were both surprised and delighted that we achieved accuracy so quickly."

Violence had also been a talking point in Colin Baker's first full season: "It was a matter of saying to the writers that we could be more realistic, something I've always been in favour of...We want to imply that if you hit someone it hurts", replied Saward. Nathan-Turner agreed: "Somehow parents have this dim and distant memory of the show, where they remember it with fondness and affection and forget the fact that they themselves were often frightened...Our first intention is to entertain - we don't set out to offend or upset anyone."

Nathan-Turner was asked how involved he became in rehearsals, an interesting question considering Saward's subsequent allegations. Here he gave the appearance of being reasonably in touch: "I go up for the read-through and then I tend to go up halfway through rehearsals just for an hour or so. I sit around ostensibly chatting but actually watching what's going on so that the actors who don't know me won't regard me as some sort of evil ogre who is going to sack them at the producer's run."

Not surprisingly, the interview ended with Nathan-Turner somewhat upbeat and optimistic about the future: "When we come back people won't notice we've been away. There will be no decision on scripts and directors for some time yet, though we have more than enough to choose from...One of the benefits of losing a whole season is that normally Eric and I have to get together over a hurried drink or on the journey back from the Acton rehearsal rooms...what's quite nice is that if we don't feel like talking on a Wednesday then we can wait until Thursday...The show will return with a vengeance next year, complete with the line-up of Colin and Nicola to go right through the season - we have no plans to introduce any more companions or anything... At the moment I feel very strongly that the return season will be my last as producer."

November 1985 saw the first Genesis convention, organised by the controversial DWAS-breakaway Phoenix group, and held in Manchester with Nathan-Turner one of the guests. The subsequent panel produced one of the most interesting discussions on the current state of the series, with JNT answering many questions from an eager audience (ref:DWB#29/30). When quizzed on his reaction to the "suspension" news, Nathan-Turner described it as "Horrid. I think my feeling was that of the rest of my team and all the actors concerned...I think we all felt fairly devastated...We have on the shelf the whole of the season that didn't happen. The overall shape of next season (23) is very much up in the air still...It's really a case of waiting for the new scripts to come in, to ensure that they're better than the stuff we had on the shelf and re-examining those ones that we haven't read for several months." When asked about his attitude to criticism from fandom he gave a magnanimous reply: "I feel that one should not take the criticism too personally or too seriously and plough on, doing the job that one does, and doing it to the best of one's ability. That's not to say that people are not entitlted to their opinions."

As in the DWM interview, JNT was decidedly upbeat about the make-or-break Season 23, promising that it would be "stunning" and elaborated thus: "The hiatus has given us more time than we've ever had to think and act accordingly on what we want to do when we return. If something's been off for 18 months, when it comes back it's **got** to be sensational and I hope we can deliver the goods." Unlike the DWM interview, however, he refused to comment when asked if Nicola Bryant was going to leave before the end of the season and if any new companions were planned. This was a complete about face in the space of a couple of months, but the reason remains unknown.

He was happy to chat about his criteria for casting the Doctor, though: "...One is always looking for an actor who can inject his own personality to the fullest. In addition, because I've been in a position to cast two of them(sic), inevitably you want to go right away from the predecessor and no way would I ever have cast Colin to follow Tom. But Colin is a perfect successor to Peter... the major factor is a big personality."

All in all, Nathan-Turner gave a relaxed and confident performance, happily answering a wide range of questions from the audience in an atmosphere surprisingly free from rancour and acrimony, unlike DWASocial 5 earlier in the year when JNT ended up in a slanging match with Ian Levine after the latter dared to suggest the episode count would be slashed from 26 to 20. JNT poured scorn on Levine's claim, inciting the audience to treat **Doctor Who**'s most devoted fan as a ranting maniac. History has since proved both to be wrong - the episode count was hacked to 14, though one doubts Levine ever received the apology he deserved.

Nathan-Turner's next, and last, appearance at an audience-based convention - PanoptiCon VII - was made in exceptionally difficult circumstances following the shock resignation and subsequent allegations made by Eric Saward at a time when work on the final episode of the vital **Trial of a Time Lord** season was uncompleted. Perhaps surprisingly the audience rewarded his appearance by not asking any questions on the suject although he still remained clearly subdued throughout his session, flanked by the nauseatingly sycophantic Jane Baker who clearly presented more of an embarassment to JNT than any question from the attendees! When asked what he thought of the show's future, he replied, in the subdued fashion which characterised his entire appearance at this convention: "It's very, very healthy...Michael Grade has seen the first episode (of Season 23) and enjoyed it tremendously. At this moment in time next season (24) looks very, very firm indeed. The shape would be similar to this, in other words 14 episodes...I'm unlikely to be producing it. I want to move on to something else...I am working on a new project and I very much want to move on...I don't want to think about doing anymore." Reported criticism from B B C executives that the programme was 'old and tired' was denied by Nathan-Turner who dismissed it as an "unsubstantiated newspaper report" and continued: "No criticism from the 6th floor has ever come to me."

One year on things had not improved much, with the sacking of Colin Baker and the arrival of Sylvester McCoy for what was to be another 'make-or-break' season. As part of Sylvester's pre-publicity Nathan-Turner appeared on several TV shows including Open Air on September 29th 1987 during which he made his notorious 'memory cheats' remark which embittered so many people.

Following the less than totally enthusiastic reception received by McCoy's debut, Nathan-Turner gave an interview to Starburst magazine (#113), his first for the publication since 1980 (ref:DWB#73). The discussion appeared to have got off to a frosty start with monosyllabic replies to questions as probing as: Do you have any comment to make on Eric Saward's departure ? "No, none at all", or: Presumably it was a blow when Colin Baker's contract was not renewed ? "Uh-huh, I felt sad in many ways." Thankfully things picked up a bit after that awkward start, though ironically one of the first thoughtful answers he gave was on how he set about finding a new script editor(!): "There are lots of literary agents who suggest writers to us. I spoke to them and other people within the industry and also with script editors who were leaving other projects; the final choice being Andrew Cartmel, who was suggested by an agent. He's done quite a bit of writing, most of which has never been formally published; I've read much of it and it's really terrific quality. This is the first time that he's script-edited." Nathan-Turner was also asked why he had changed his mind (for the umpteenth time) about producing another season. Was it the prospect of working with a new team ?: "Absolutely...and the enormous attraction of the approaching season; plus persuasion from my peers." Nathan-Turner went on to describe how he worked with Andrew Cartmel on the new season: "Andrew is very keen...to cultivate new writing talent for the show and he's found some interesting people, or at least brought them to my attention, as I had actually met Stephen Wyatt and we'd talked generally about the possibility of his writing for **Doctor Who** before Andrew was appointed as script editor. Andrew did however work very closely with Stephen and also brought in Malcolm(Kholl) and Ian(Briggs)."

Two highly controversial aspects of the series' production at this time were the tendancy to cast 'showbiz' personalities in prominent rôles and the related pantomimesque atmosphere that appeared to be prevailing every episode. Nathan-Turner stoutly remained adamant on these charges, using jargon similar to that of his Open Air appearance: "...If you mean that more well-known actors and actresses are appearing, it's true...I have said in the past that **Doctor Who** has become like the Morecambe & Wise show which has been misquoted as **'Doctor Who** is like the Morecambe & Wise show'. What I actually meant was that as with the Morecambe & Wise show many well known people in the profession want to appear in **Doctor Who**; they actually ask if they can be cast in it. So if a suitable personality part comes along as with the one Ken Dodd played then I'm delighted to have them come aboard...I'm afraid it's so ridiculous to liken **Doctor Who** to a second-rate pantomime. As many readers of Starburst will know, I do have a certain penchant for pantomime as a release from the pressures of 50 weeks a year with the B B C and I often become involved with a panto at Christmas for a change of pace. I do consider myself a purist in pantomime terms and something of an expert in the field. Having said that, I can honestly say that I see no similarities between the two whatsoever." This reply in itself is absurd since, by JNT's own admission, he is an expert regarding pantomime, so he can hardly have an objective eye in observing whether or not he was turning **Doctor Who** into one!

Asked his opinion of the timeslot for the series: "Well now that we're getting a healthy five million per episode(?) I think it's quite a good one. I always said before transmission that in some ways it was a good idea to put it opposite Coronation Street and that I'm all for what Michael Grade has termed alternative scheduling, offering viewers a choice. On the other hand it was very daunting to be placed against a show that goes out 52 weeks a year and has been running even longer than **Doctor Who** itself...as I had to look at it from two different points of view and I must say that the viewing figures seem to have pleased the sixth floor, though of course we would like to reach six million by the end of the run." It should of course be noted that Michael Grade was JNT's boss, so it is understandable he might have been reluctant to criticise Grade's scheduling.

As the 25th anniversary drew near it was inevitable that the show, and the producer, would begin to exhibit a higher profile, with several articles, interviews and books appearing on all aspects of the series. Naturally DWM was not left out of the fun, and amongst other things published what it clearly saw as its final interview with Nathan-Turner, at least in his capacity as producer (ref:DWM#140 - 'From Argolis To Windsor'). Nathan-Turner obviously agreed. When asked about his future plans he replied: "I've asked to move on from **Doctor Who.** I'm leaving because at the moment my CV has only one line on it. I think I've given everything I've got to give it. What better time to go than at the end of the 25th season? I've been asking to move on for many years, but I needed no persuasion to do this, the 25th season...I'm staying within the B B C. There are several projects involved, but I won't be able to say which project until the summer...".

JNT went on to explain how he briefed new personnel on the style they should adopt when filming stories: "There are no house rules that I have imposed apart from 'favour the Doctor', 'shoot a cliffhanger in a certain way', and 'start a first episode in a certain way'. Apart from that I am very keen that directors bring their own interpretation to it. I am not trying to do a load of stories very much the same...We don't set out to terrify five-year-olds. We attract a family audience so 35 to 40% of our audience is under sixteen, and at the same time anything before 9 o'clock is governed by the guidelines on violence...I wouldn't want to terrify anyone, particularly young children, but we want to live up to the confines of the slot."

He also detailed his policy of bringing in 'unknown' people to work on scripts: "I think that the new writers that we have encouraged, whether they're experienced or not, are bringing fresh ideas; they challenge the system and by the system I include myself...we really needed to get a new band of writers and as I've been here for a long time, it's more challenging and stimulating to have people say 'why not?'".

One thing JNT was very keen to emphasize was his enthusiasm for Sylvester McCoy's performance as the Doctor: "No matter how much you describe his abilities, it's not the same as watching him. He has an amazing physicality, a very, very physical performer... He's inventive. The most boring scene when he runs down a corridor is turned into something special. I'm thrilled with him, I really am."

Once again Nathan-Turner was challenged about the affect of criticism on the way he produced the programme, and once again he gave a combated response: "The criticism that I relate and respond to is from my peers - because it is my living - and at this moment in time my peers are delighted with what I am doing and are actually horror struck that I want to move on." Is JNT really that short-sighted enough to actually **believe** this absurd explanation, or was he attempting to cover-up the fact that he was kept on **Doctor Who** because there was **nowhere** else for him to go? He continues: "I am all for criticism as long as it's constructive. But I do think that people view what is happening in **Doctor Who** now with slightly jaundiced eyes. You may have watched it at an impressionable age...The memory cheats; I'm not trying to dilute anyone's criticism but some people actually watch it in a timewarp." After this pathetic attempt at justifying his own mistakes, he was asked 'What have you got out of being the producer of **Doctor Who** ?' His reply could be regarded by some people as indicative of his whole attitude to the job. Others will

doubtless take it as a perfectly reasonable comment: "It has given me a knowledge of the entertainment industry in America which I never dreamed I would ever have. Because of the conventions over there I've been over many times and met a lot of very important people in the industry. That's a great privilege really. I actually feel that I know enough to be able to work over there, should I wish to...I've made a lot of friends because of **Doctor Who.** A lot of the actors and writers and directors have remained very good friends. There's very much a family feel to it." It is perhaps understandable that he makes no reference to the various people he fell out with along the way and no longer associates with.

It was inevitable that the 25th anniversary would be marked by a Peter Haining flung-together effort on the subject, and when 25 Glorious Years was published it contained a long interview with Nathan-Turner covering his entire career in **Doctor Who** right from his first work as floor assistant on **The Space Pirates** in the 60's: "We made **The Space Pirates** at Lime Grove studios. The actual studio was on the fourth floor and the dressing rooms were on the ground floor and in the basement. There was just one minute old lift with metal gates linking the floors and I seemed to spend my entire time running up and down fetching people...There was a very jolly atmosphere about making that story, something which Patrick Troughton helped create and which was a hallmark about everything he did in the series."

JNT returned to the series during the Pertwee era, working on **The Ambassadors of Death** and **Colony in Space,** the latter leaving a strong impression on him: "**Colony in Space** had a marvellous performance by Roger Delgado as the original Master. I'll never forget the impact of the character, and it was one of the reasons why I later brought it back after Roger's death." Not surprisingly he recalled Pertwee as being fascinated by gadgets and commended the amount of promotion he has done for the series since he left the rôle: "...He's the keenest of all the Doctors to put on his costume and perform. Whenever he turns up at a convention he always starts his appearance with the words 'I am the Doctor'."

Nathan-Turner dealt with his experiences with the next three Doctors in a similarly brisk fashion (Colin Baker merits one paragraph) and the bulk of the interview revolves around events since the casting of Sylvester McCoy: "Sylvester has a tremendous baptism of fire. We clinched the deal on a Friday, launched him to the press on a Monday, and on Wednesday he and I were on a plane to America for more press receptions and a convention...And that was only the start of it...But he coped wonderfully well... Bonnie(Langford) helped bridge the change-over of Doctors very well. She established a very good relationship with Sylvester...I know there are those who love Bonnie or hate her, but to my mind that is the mark of somebody who is making an impact." What this actually means when translated into English is anybody's guess, but Nathan-Turner, attempting to justify this woeful piece of miscasting, had the audacity to add, in his 'I can do no wrong' manner: "I think she has been very good for **Doctor Who.**"

Something else that JNT considered 'good' for **Doctor Who** was publicity: "Because **Doctor Who** is a serial we need to promote and publicise it regularly. I think publicity is tremendously important and I am surprised that there are some people in television who don't pay enough attention to it. We regularly issue information from this office to all the press so they can provide details about the show for people to read in their morning papers...I am also very keen on co-operating with other programmes like, say, Breakfast Time, who ask if they can come and film us at work or get an interview to mark something special like an anniversary."

A related aspect of Nathan-Turner's activities was the promotion of the series at conventions in America especially, which he was eager to defend: "People may imagine that it is really glamorous to go to these conventions. But often all you see during the course of a weekend is an airport lounge and the hotel where the event is being staged. You have to get up, perform; sleep, get up and perform; then go home." Before you start feeling sorry for JNT, it should be noted that he was also in the position to command substantial fees for himself as well as the many stars of the show - many of whom were also close personal friends - to attend these events in addition to their professional incomes.

Nathan-Turner went on to describe his feelings about fandom and the many and varied brickbats he's received from it over the years: "There are some superb fans, especially in America where there is a tremendous feeling of warmth towards the programme. I don't feel the same predominance of warmth in the UK. Certainly there is a small faction of people here who hate my work - and they are quite entitled to their opinions. But there do seem to be one or two who are trying to become stars in the fan world by being deliberately sensational in what they write. Some of the criticism I have seen levelled has been quite ridiculous - and I've been in and out of fashion so many times during my years in this chair that it is absurd. It is the difference between constructive and destructive criticism that concerns me. I don't mind about personal criticism so long as it doesn't go so far that I have to take legal action, but what I do care about are actors who rely on reviews being attacked in a derogatory and destructive way, because it is their livelihoods that are at stake."

After a brief discussion of the then forthcoming **Doctor Who** movie (yes, the Coast To Coast saga is getting a mite tiresome now), the interview wound up with Haining stating that 'John has also announced that at the end of the twenty-fifth anniversary season he will be relinquishing the producer's chair..." As so often in the past this assertion turned out to be wide of the mark, and come March '89 Nathan-Turner was still in the hot seat and being interviewed, this time in the pages of Private Who (#14). What was billed as a 'rare interview with a fan magazine' concentrated solely on events since the arrival of McCoy as the Doctor, hardly surprising since this is the era to which this magazine aspires to and which, in its opinion, can do no wrong. After a few questions on the casting of McCoy, more general matters were debated such as the 'light entertainment' stars who seemed to be popping up more and more in stories, people like Richard Briers, for instance: "Basically actors are actors. The fact that they might have only done comedy for the last 15 years doesn't mean they can't do the straighter stuff. In **Paradise Towers** there are in fact bits that are very very straight. Yes, there are the odd whimsies...The only person where I think we've taken a comedian, which is a very different thing, was with Doddie(Ken). And that was quite deliberate because the part was written as a comedy character."

"I had to be persuaded to do twenty-four at a very late stage because I'd been led to believe I wasn't doing it anyway. To be persuaded to do twenty-five took ten seconds, to be absolutely honest, I said immediately I'd do it. To which my then boss said, 'Oh, you've changed your tune', and I said 'Well, it's the twenty-fifth season which is a landmark but I can say, here and now, that I'd like that to be my very last." This could actually be quite funny if it wasn't for the fact that it is downright pathetic. Aside from the blasé manner in which JNT appears to treat it, the situation displays a gross amount of unprofessionalism on the part of the B B C, both in their unco-ordinated treatment of the series and their carefree disregard for a producer's career. And of course, as with all of Nathan-Turner's previous declarations on this subject, his wish was sadly unfulfilled.

Unlike the earlier assertions, it was unusual in being overtaken by events in the space of a few paragraphs for later, in the same interview, he was asked why he is now doing Season 26(!): "Andrew(Cartmel) and I were working on a new project which was quite a long way down the road to being done. Unfortunately a long-running series which was supposed to be doing its last season (Bergerac?) is going again...As a result our project has been put on ice for twelve months...It was not, as someone implied recently, that I've always known I was staying on, I really didn't. I'm often talking about my CV only having one line but there's a charisma involved with a silver anniversary season that has been well-received...There's not a lot of kudos involved with Season 26. I mean, there's nothing to peg any publicity to it. It's just another series." One can only assume the interview was conducted in two parts, held at least a few days apart.

The last section of the article dealt once again with Nathan-Turner's attitude to fandom after ten years, always an awkward part of any interview since he can hardly be expected to be fully objective in his response, as demonstrated here: "A lot of them are extremely pleasant people, whose company I've enjoyed at various events. But there's always a small element of sensation-seekers who, in my opinion, have done irreparable damage to the show in the eyes of the B B C...I think that the criticism is sometimes unjust, and I'm not talking about myself because I've been in and out of fashion so many times that it all washes over my head now. I am concerned that some fans' letters and reviews that I've seen over the years are so vehemently critical of performers whose livelihood it is. You wouldn't like it done to you...As I said, a lot of them, I've enjoyed there company...There's always that small element, however, most of whom wish to become notorious in the world of fandom. I don't bear any real grudge against most of them...Once you've been boo-ed at a convention you've got to be some sort of masochist to want to go back. People forget you're giving up your spare time...to go in front of a panel who, a) want to be bitchy and, b) boo you ? Oh please."

And that more or less wraps up our review of ten years of John Nathan-Turner interviews, although completists may wish to check out the December issue of Starburst for his most recent, and fairly nondescript, interview which trod familiar grounds. To sum up, Nathan-Turner may not have liked some of the criticism lavished upon him over the years, but as this article of some of his most infamous quotes have illustrated only too well, he only ever had **HIMSELF** to blame. Farewell JNT, the producer who would be The Doctor...

Compiled and written by Richard Fitzgerald and Gary Leigh

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REMEMBRANCE OF THE DALEKS

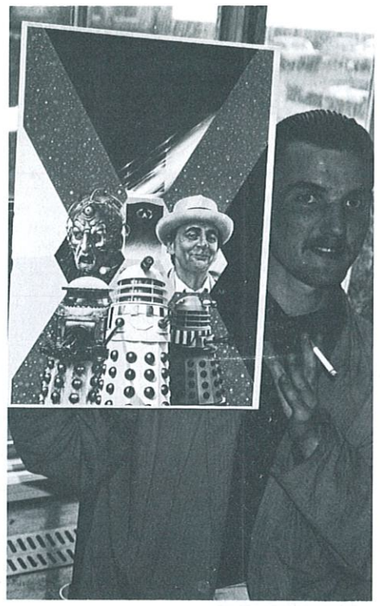
The Making of the Book Cover

ALISTER PEARSON was notified by Mike Brett, Art Director at W.H.Allen, of the commission to illustrate the cover of 'Remembrance of the Daleks' on Friday October 28th, 1988, less than 48 hours after the fourth episode of the story being broadcast on television!

However, a preliminary sketch for the Dalek tale was not requested until March 20th, 1989. During that time, as well as working on other covers, Alister had come up with a fairly clear idea of what he intended to include in the painting and in what way the elements were to be arranged. Having received the request, it was a matter of sorting through the various reference photographs he had available and watching a video recording in order to make some notes and rough sketches of the 'Omega' gravestone and the details of Davros' altered appearance.

The sketch was shown to Mike Brett on Thursday March 23rd when Alister delivered the painting for the cover of **The Mutation of Time.** The Art Director prefers illustrations to be kept relatively simple, believing Pearson's covers for **The Chase** and **Mission to the Unknown** to be overly complex. As he says: "There's only so much room on a book cover." No judgement was given on the **Remembrance** sketch, so Alister was left to wait for the 'go-ahead' (the delay probably due to the impending appointment of Peter Darvill-Evans as the new Target editor).

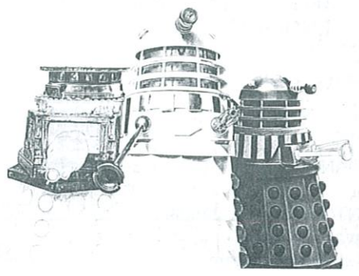
On Wednesday April 5th, Mike Brett contacted Alister saying the schedule of books had been changed (this is a common occurrence); **Silver Nemesis** and **Greatest Show in the Galaxy** had been brought forward to occupy the November and December '89 release dates, while **Remembrance** was now set back for January '90.



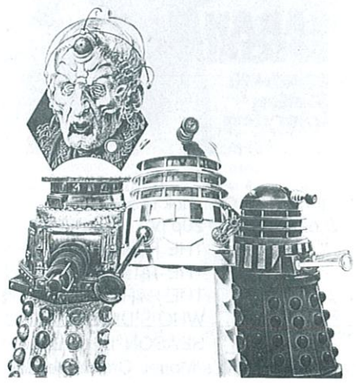
Alister poses with his latest masterpiece

Up to this point, the artist had not been given the formal commission for **Greatest Show,** although he'd indirectly been apointed to handle the cover for **Silver Nemesis** due to Kevin Clarke's enthusiasm (ref:DWB#69). Now having all four Season 25 stories to work on, Pearson set to work sketching for these two stories. During their conversation, Mike Brett had mentioned that the Dalek sketch (which he'd lost!) was, so far as he could remember, okay. He also gave Alister the job of doing the cover for the updated Programme Guide (ref:DWB#71). Taking this as an informal 'go-ahead', Pearson began work on **Remembrance of the Daleks** on April 7th...

STAGE ONE



STAGE TWO



STAGE THREE

STAGE ONE (17-4-89)

After ten days, this is all that had been done! (The cover for **Paradise Towers** was completed in the same amount of time!). Alister is firmly convinced that he is jinxed with Dalek covers. He was ill during the work on **The Chase** and both halves of the **Master Plan.** Coincidence or not, Alister was again dogged by illness, tiredness and basic apathy (his usual state of being!) during the whole 25-day time span that it took to produce this picture.

"As I wasn't working to a strict deadline I only worked on the bloody thing when I felt like it - which wasn't very often or very consistently", he says. "Daleks are incredibly boring buggers to paint...and very tricky. The Imperial Dalek was the trickiest and the most time-consuming I've ever done - the gun alone took an hour and a half to do, the sucker arm two hours and the nine visible sections of the gold foil 'neck' each took half an hour (all those tiny dots drove me **crazy!**)".

Ignoring the gold skirt balls for the time being, he went on to paint the so-called 'rebel' Dalek, adapted from a photo of a cream and gold **Revelation** model. The Special Weapons Dalek was a little more interesting to recreate, mainly due to the different, less repetitive design and all the grime!

STAGE TWO (20-4-89)

"The Gunner's gun took just over three hours to get right - all those concentric circles were a nightmare!" With constant referal to his video copy, Alister paints Davros, adapting and 'flipping' a photo from **Resurrection** which he has used before (ref:DWM#118).

STAGE THREE (24-4-89)

Now the painting's background is taking shape. The four hexagons represent the front elevation of the Dalek shuttle. "With these four stories, I wanted a shape to work around. On **Nemesis** it's a Swastika, but on **Patrol** and **Show** I've got to simplify matters so the ideas and images I wanted to incorporate have fallen by the wayside."

The Imperial Dalek's skirt section is still being overlooked in favour of doing McCoy's portrait: "Sylvester has a wonderful face to paint, though. Like Tom Baker, he **never** looks the same in any two photos! Choosing a good reference is always a problem, however. I chose this one because the Doctor has a sort of slightly smug smile, as if he knows what's going to happen which, so far as this story is concerned, he does!"

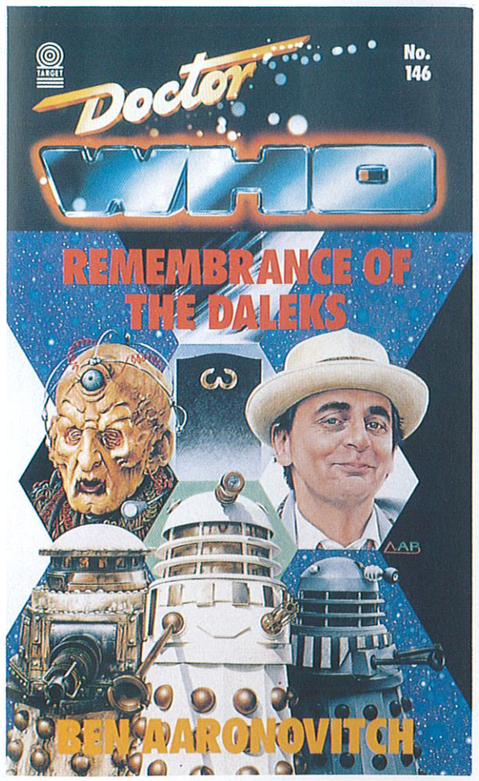
The top section is silvery, reflecting the shape of the gravestone, over which the title lettering will be positioned on the printed version.

STAGE FOUR (1-5-89)

At last! The painting is completed. The skirt balls each took 15 minutes to paint: "Now you know why I kept putting those off!"

Article compiled by James Howarth

STAGE FOUR - The end result



SHOREDITCH, London 1963. Two teachers follow an unnervingly knowledgeable schoolgirl to her home - a blue police telephone box in the middle of a scrapyard. The old man whom the girl calls 'grandfather is annoyed at the intrusion: there is something he has to do, and he has a premonition that he will be delayed for some time.

Six regenerations later the Doctor returns; and Ace, his travelling companion, sees London as it was before the Sixties started swinging - and long before she was born.

But a grey Dalek is lurking in Foreman's Yard; Imeperial Daleks are appearing in the basement of Coal Hill School; and both factions want the Hand of Omega, the Remote Stellar Manipulator that the Doctor has left behind. Has the Doctor arrived in time to deprive the Daleks of the secret of time travel ?

PUBLISHED APRIL 1990 BY W.H.ALLEN, PRICE £2.50

"A book that fans have been starved of for a very long time"

THERE HAS NOT been a 'Doctor Who' book quite like Ben Aaronovitch's 'Remembrance of the Daleks' before.

You might need reminding that what you're reading really is the same book that you surreptitiously smuggled out of the children's section in W.H.Smith's. The one that you clung close to your chest as you waited in the endless queue, throwing nervous glances at the cashier as she rang it oh-so-slowly into the till. The one that you hurriedy paid for, cringing as a knowingly smug grin began to sneak across the cashier's face as you uttered the words, "I hope my ten-year-old brother likes it - do you think I could have a bag for it, please?" But, it is. **Remembrance** is a book that **Doctor Who** fans have been starved of, deprived of, for a **very** long time.

SURPRISES

As the tale unfolds, you will appreciate that the book does more than slot a few missing pieces into a long-unfinished jigsaw; it completes the jigsaw and then surprises you with a completely different picture to the one that was, in more senses than one, on the box.

It is going to annoy you, it may even infuriate you. It will puzzle, amuse and entertain. Quite simply, this book has rewritten **Doctor Who** lore, breathing life, coherence and clarity into a body long given up for dead: the **Doctor Who** novel.

I was quite worried at first, for a book that opens with a quote from Richard III (which does make more sense after reading the book) does give cause for alarm. To follow the quote with a prologue (one that covers a few seconds of **An Unearthly Child**) smacked of self-indulgence, but, in the context of what follows, it is perfectly acceptable.

What Ben Aaronovitch has done is carefully woven into the story that we saw on television a network of fibres so intricate that they encompass stories from the history of the programme as far apart as **An Unearthly Child** and - most intriguingly - **Ghost Light.** In the same way that **The Curse of Fenric** finally explains some of the mysteries of **Dragonfire, Remembrance** strengthens the **Doctor Who** myth. The book explains the events that led to the formation of UNIT. It tantalizes the reader with details of the creation of the Time Lord race, without causing too many ripples. It also reinvigorates Ian Briggs' Ace with more facts about her life before the whirlwind dropped her in Oz.

PLETHORA OF DATA

Aaronovitch also brings a great deal of information about the Daleks to the book. The way that they function, the way that they think. Dammit, the way that they **live!** With a plethora of data that sometimes teeters on the edge of overkill, Aaronovitch does succeed in creating, for perhaps the first time ever, a believable account of an alien invasion in a **Doctor Who** novel. These Daleks are invested with a history, social structure and credibility only previously attempted on such an awesome scale by Brian Hayles (with the Ice Warriors) and David Banks (with the Cybermen).

The book encapsulates what a great **Doctor Who** book should be. It expands on the televised version in every way, bringing to the fore emotions, inner thoughts and feelings that no actor could realistically expect to present. It creates people out of characters, and situations out of events. (Thankfully, that pesky bit with the TV announcer is missing too, replaced by "some woman with a posh accent thick enough to insulate cavity walls who played a piano while a wooden donkey jerked up and down").

Really, all I wanted this review to say was, "Come next April grab a copy and **read it!**": the book's too interesting to put barriers between it and you, and life's too short. If you've been wary of the Target book adaptions of **Doctor Who** stories in the past, then this book can be recommended as an exception to a range sadly weighted towards the puerile. If you're a fan of **Doctor Who,** you really should buy this book. I'm not suggesting that it will change the way that you look at **Doctor Who,** but it's going to have a bloody good try...

JULIAN KNOTT

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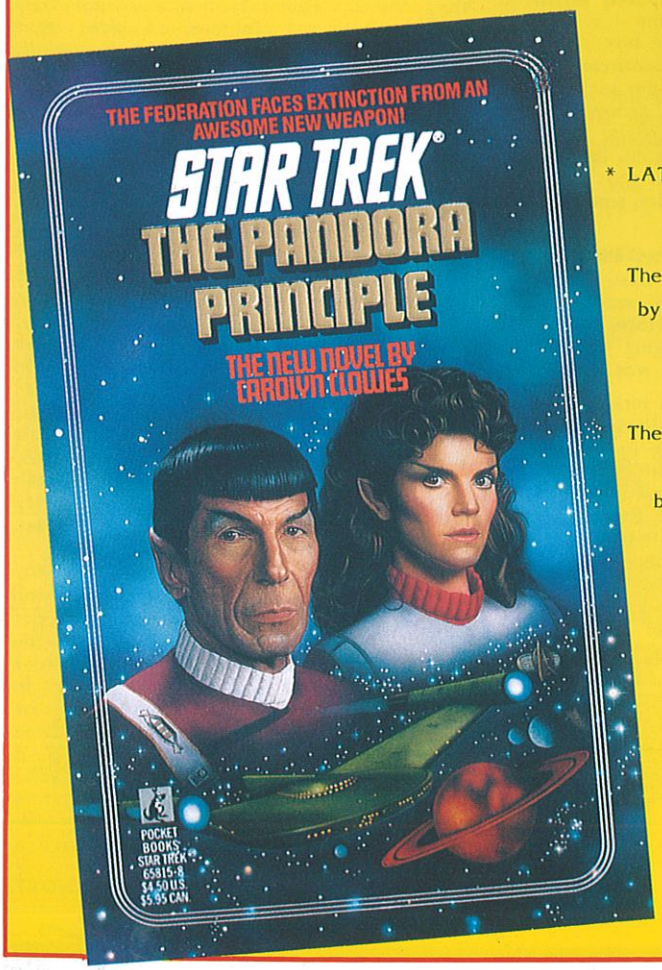

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